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ANOTHER BAD BREAK FOR KESLER

SPEEDY CANUCKS CENTRE HAS A FRACTURED BONE IN HIS RIGHT FOOT AND COULD BE OUT FOR WEEKS PAGE 45

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Changing Chinatown: Condos, culture & the end of cheap rent?

Mixed feelings about highrises. Some say it's growth, others fear it's gentrification

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Condos will soon replace the clothing shop Wilson Ng manages in the heart of Chinatown, but his business doesn't mind moving a few blocks to make room for the new neighbours.

"Chinatown has been quiet for many years. I think the condos will bring extra people," Ng said Wednesday at his store District Factory Outlet at 611 Main St. where "80 per cent off" closing signs hung in the windows.

With city council's approval of the 17-storey mixed-use building last week — and the expected approval at a public hearing Wednesday night of a 16-storey building next door at 633 Main St. — the intersection of Main and Keefer is undergoing a massive change.

Slated to be the tallest buildings built in the historic neighbourhood since council approved new area height restrictions in 2011, the projects will transform a block occupied by a salon, a brokerage and many vacant storefronts.

Many are excited about the building bringing energy to the area that has struggled as the community ages.

Jimi Hendrix Shrine operator Vincent Fodera wrote a letter supporting the developments so long as they respect Chinatown's heritage and architecture.

But others say it's just another example of gentrification that will cause displacement.

"This is the developer's party," said Sid Tan, a founding director of the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Council. "What you have is a skewed plan of Chinatown."

Low-income residents were left out of a 10-year consultation process, Tan said, and there was never a social-impact study on the changes.

Albert Fok of the Chinatown Business Improvement Association disagreed, noting that 22 units at 611 Main St. are secured rental units for seniors. (Eleven of these will rent at welfare rates.)

"It's good to see we're bringing residents back into Chinatown," Fok said, adding it should be a mix of social and market housing. "Regardless of income, you still need to eat and buy groceries."

Both developers of the Main Street projects have promised public art, tweaked their designs to have more "Chinatown character" and will each contribute more than $1.2 million to community amenities.

The Chinatown intersection of Main and Keefer is about to undergo massive change. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Sex workers get carded

Working girls will now have a pocket-sized card outlining their rights PAGE 6

Not bullying, if it's politics

The premier is refusing to call an MLA a bully after "scum" email PAGE 7

Oscars outrage

U.S. lawmakers slam Academy Awards host Seth MacFarlane for "degrading women" PAGE 15

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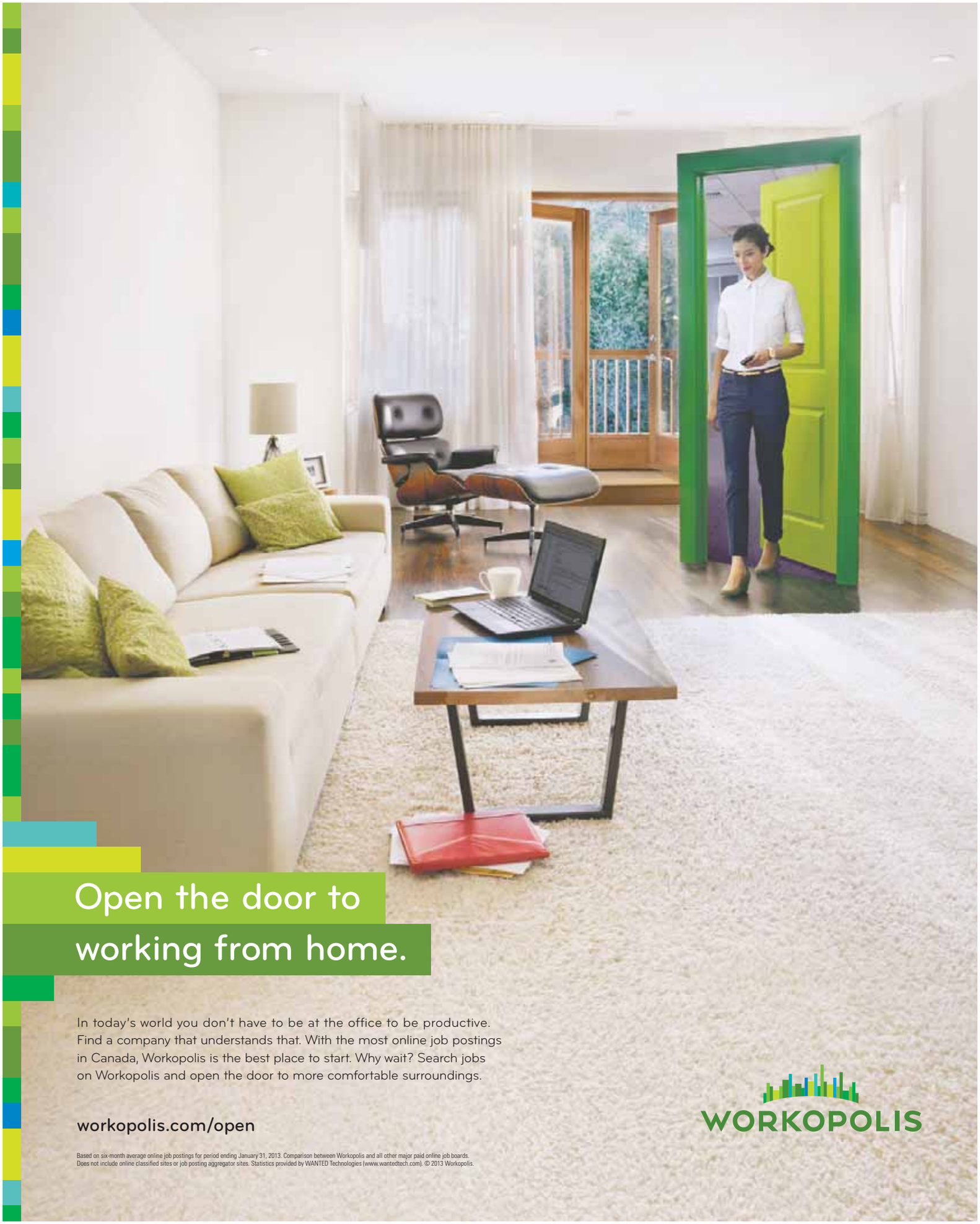

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Accusations

Leaked email shows B.C. Liberals have ethnic-vote plan

The B.C. Liberals are once again being accused of using government resources for partisan purposes.

Their Multicultural Strategic Outline Plan, contained in a leaked email from Christy Clark's deputy chief of staff Kim Haakstad, was addressed to senior staff and spells out roles to engage ethnic voters for the Liberals.

The NDP said the plan's objective of "making sure that government, caucus and the party are all working together" violates the rules of employment for government staff.

"This secret plan clearly demonstrates the Liberals are deliberately folding government resources and staff into their party's campaign machinery," NDP House Leader John Horgan said.

At an event in Point Grey on Wednesday, Christy Clark said the plan's purpose was the exact opposite.

"What (Haakstad) was trying to do is make sure she was sorting out the roles that people had because you can't have government people doing political work and you shouldn't have political people doing government work," she said.

In clinical terms the plan notes Liberal strengths connecting with ethnic voters: "Political centre-right is a natural position for many ethnic/immigrant communities."

It also notes weaknesses, such as their handling of the HST and lack of ethnic candidates.

It also calls for "Quick Wins," such as apologizing for the Komagata Maru incident.

LIAM BRITTEN/METRO, WITH FILES FROM PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS

Vancouver Aquarium director of Arctic programs Eric Solomon works to capture the magic and mystery of the northern lights in Nunavut. Solomon and photographer Neil Fisher had their Nunavut expedition turn tragic following the death of a Canadian Ranger accompanying them earlier this month.
NEIL FISHER/VANCOUVER AQUARIUM

Rangers honoured following tragedy

In the North. Officials from the city aquarium had their Nunavut expedition take a grievous turn

Two Vancouver Aquarium staff members' trip to the Arctic was cut short by tragedy when a Canadian Ranger accompanying them died in a snowmobiling accident Feb. 17 — but Eric Solomon is using the experience to draw attention to the important environmental monitoring Rangers are doing.

Solomon, the aquarium's director of Arctic programs, and photographer Neil Fisher left Vancouver Feb. 11. They were joining a mission called Canadian Rangers Ocean Watch (CROW), which trains the Rangers living in Nunavut to measure things such as ocean warming, acidification, and sudden changes in fish populations and other species.

"In order for scientists to collect data about the Arctic Ocean in the winter they have to somehow get out onto the ice and be able to do this," Solomon explained.

"Well these guys and gals in Gjoa Haven [Nunavut] in this case are intimately familiar with the landscape, with the ice, where it's safe, where it's not safe, where the wildlife are and aren't, and therefore the potentially important areas for the scientific research to take place.

"They were both helping to keep us safe, and their knowledge was really important for this scientific research to even happen in the first place."

The group had just set out on a 10-day expedition outside the town of Gjoa Haven when Cpl. Donald Anguyoak died.

The Department of National Defence has said the accident is under investigation and because of that, for now, no further details are being released.

Solomon was not permitted to speak about it to Metro, but wrote on his blog that Anguyoak was a father, grandfather, hockey coach, leader, and inspiration to many in his community.

"I cannot say I knew Donald well — we had only spent less than a week together," he wrote, "but in a tight-knit and welcoming community such as Gjoa Haven, the grief and sense of loss touches everyone, including the three "kabloonas" (southerners) that were with Donald at the time of the accident."

The rest of the exercise was cancelled but Solomon and Fisher stayed in the town for a week to grieve and provide whatever support they could to Anguyoak's friends and family.

They plan to return to Nunavut continue their work with the CROW program in May.

KATE WEBB/METRO

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Pests. Judge sues strata after moisture draws ants

A provincial court judge and his wife are suing their strata council over alleged negligent maintenance and mould damage to their suite — damage found during a major ant infestation.

The ants came from the outside patio deck and spread into the walls of the condo owned by Judge Paul Meyers and his wife Cheryl, who is a manager of victim services for the New Westminster police department, says the legal action.

The couple hired a pest control company to eliminate the ant infestation, which failed to solve the problem.

The strata hired another company to investigate and cut a hole in an interior wall, discovering the ants were entering the suite from an open hole to the outside at the Shaughnessy Place condo complex in Vancouver.

It was also discovered the ants were attracted to moisture in the walls where they were laying eggs.

Mould spores were found in the walls, making the suite uninhabitable by Oct. 11 last year, the civil claims says.

The legal action, filed in B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver, claims further investigation by an engineering expert hired by the plaintiffs found cracks in the exterior concrete wall, as well as poor caulking and maintenance of the exterior wall.

The engineer advised the strata council about the water leaks from the cracked concrete wall and the faulty patio door and window assemblies, but the strata council has been negligent in fixing the problems, the civil lawsuit claims.

The couple are seeking damages and an order for the strata council to repair the defects to their home.

NEAL HALL/THE CANADIAN PRESS, EXCLUSIVELY FOR METRO

Tribunal. Complaint over bus seating dismissed

The B.C. Human Rights Tribunal has dismissed a complaint from a man who felt he was discriminated against when he was asked to move out of a bus seat for the elderly and disabled to make room for a mother with a stroller.

Larry Ballash filed a complaint against Coast Mountain Bus Company, alleging discrimination on the basis of physical disability.

He alleged that on May 10 last year, he complained to the company that the seating at the front of the bus reserved for the elderly and disabled was routinely being occupied by people who were neither. He complained he was personally asked to move so the mother could occupy one of those seats.

The bus company argued Ballash's complaint of discrimination should be dismissed, arguing the man was not disabled and besides, the seats in question were "courtesy seats" for seniors, passengers with strollers and people with disabilities.

The bus company told the human rights tribunal that although bus drivers are trained to seek compliance with its priority seating policy, they are not required to compel passengers to move as they are not trained in assessing disabilities.

Tribunal chair Bernd Walter decided this week that Ballash "failed to allege any of the elements of a prima facie case of discrimination," so granted the bus company's application to dismiss. NEAL HALL/THE CANADIAN PRESS, EXCLUSIVELY FOR METRO

Reform

Bill on voting for senators meant to stir debate

Legislation introduced in Victoria would allow British Columbia residents to vote for the people they want to serve in the Senate in Ottawa.

But no one will be voting any time soon because Justice Minister Shirley Bond says the government doesn't intend to pass the bill before the provincial election in May.

Bond says the main aim of the bill is to get people talking about senate reform. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Retired judge

Guard should have been charged

A retired judge has ruled that a former Vancouver jail guard who used a key to punch a handcuffed prisoner should have faced a criminal charge in the incident.

No charges were laid against guard Thomas Driscoll in the 2010 incident, and Vancouver Police later determined he abused authority and ordered retraining and a written reprimand.

The judge says the cuffed prisoner was vulnerable and offered only mild resistance. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Darryl Gasbarri poses in his horror store Netherworld Collectibles which recently opened on Hastings Street in Burnaby on Wednesday. ERIC DREGER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Burnaby's little shop of horrors

New store. Netherworld Collectibles aims to spread the 'spirit of Halloween' year round

KATE WEBB
kate.webb@metronews.ca

It's got the Venus flytrap and everything, but you won't find Rick Moranis hawking posies at Burnaby's brand new little shop of horrors.

Instead, Netherworld Collectibles owner Darryl Gasbarri sells everything a die-hard horror movie fan could ever want or need (except, you know ... braaaaaaiiinns).

From hard-to-find B-movies to comic books, collectibles and even "zombie knives," Gasbarri is hoping to cash in on his lifelong zest for the macabre with his business, which opened its doors last week at 4251 Hastings St.

"The genre itself has soared to new heights with the popularity of The Walking Dead television series," he said during a tour Wednesday, noting the show currently has the highest ratings on TV and is the most watched drama in cable history.

"They really brought a lot of the old movies to life, and it's picked up a lot more fans than there ever were before, so at this point in time it was the best thing to do, to bring that type of product to the people. It's ridiculously popular right now."

Gasbarri, who has a background in retail and has also worked in the comic book and film industries, said he has loved horror films ever since watching Alfred Hitchcock's classic thriller, The Birds, when he was five.

"I just thought it's a lot more interesting than your standard action and your romantic comedies," he explained. "Going into the monsters and the supernatural and stuff like that — it's stuff that you don't see everyday."

With tons of fake blood and other movie-making supplies in stock, Gasbarri said he plans to eventually reach out to the organizers of Vancouver's annual Zombie Walk and Halloween "Thriller" flashmob.

But for now he is focused on meeting the hundreds of kindred (undead) spirits who will flock to the Vancouver Fan Expo, April 20-21.

"Halloween will be big, absolutely," he said, "but the idea here is to have that spirit of Halloween all year round."

Top 5 indie horror films

1. Zombie (1979)
2. Conquest (1983)
3. I Sell The Dead (2011)
4. The Toxic Avenger (1984)
5. Beware! Children At Play (1989)

ACCORDING TO NETHERWORLD COLLECTIBLES

Climate change. B.C.'s remaining old-growth forests non-renewable, says Sierra Club report

One year of logging old-growth forests in southwestern British Columbia blows away a year of carbon emissions reductions made through climate-change fighting initiatives like the carbon tax, says a Sierra Club report released today.

The B.C. government continues to look for ways to feed more timber to struggling sawmills through proposed Forest Act changes, but the government is failing to consider the massive role intact old-growth forests play in fighting climate change, says the report, Carbon at Risk: B.C.'s Unprotected Old-growth Rainforest.

The report says logging old-growth forests on southern Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland in 2011 — 5,700 hectares — released three million tonnes of carbon into the atmosphere, about the same amount saved through green initiatives.

It suggests old-growth forests be considered non-renewable resources and be protected from logging because it takes hundreds of years for the forests to return to their previous status as massive carbon sinks.

Scientists cited by environmentalists say that huge, old-growth trees store massive amounts of carbon. Once they are cut down, all that carbon is released, while the resulting clear cuts store only minimal amounts. Experts estimate it could take 300 to 500 years for the forest to return to the same carbon storage potential.

However, a coastal forestry industry spokesman believes the report's findings are flawed, noting scientists also agree second growth forests store carbon and new growth actually grabs hold of more carbon than old-growth forests - which are essentially, tired, old and no longer expanding.

Rick Jeffery, Coast Forest Products Association president said the Sierra Club is only interested in halting logging. THE CANADIAN PRESS

RCMP challenges lawsuit by mother of slain woman

2008 murder. Rosemarie Surakka says police failed to uphold charter rights of daughter Lisa Dudley, who died four days after being shot

NEAL HALL
The Canadian Press
Exclusively for Metro

A lawyer for the RCMP is trying to shut down a lawsuit filed by a mother on behalf of her daughter, who died four days after she was shot in her home.

A neighbour of the victim, Lisa Dudley, had called 911 after the shooting and police cruised the neighbourhood in Mission but never went to Dudley's house to investigate.

Dudley, 37, was paralyzed after being shot twice in the neck the night of Sept. 18, 2008. She was still alive when she was found four days later by a neighbour. But she died before reaching hospital.

Dudley's boyfriend, Guthrie McKay, was also shot in the couple's home and died instantly.

Dudley's mother, Rosemarie Surakka, filed a lawsuit in 2011, claiming the RCMP and its employees failed in their duty to protect Dudley's constitutional right to life, liberty and security of a person.

But in a two-day B.C. Supreme Court hearing to have the case dismissed, the federal government is arguing a third person cannot claim the violation of charter rights of a deceased person.

"Any charter rights Ms. Dudley had terminated at the time of her death," David Kwan told the judge hearing the application to dismiss the civil lawsuit.

"The claim has no reasonable prospect of success," added Kwan, who is representing the federal minister of public safety and the attorney general of Canada.

Surakka's lawyer, Monique Pongracic-Speier, is expected to argue the case should go to trial because of the mother's public-interest standing.

The mother maintains it was wrong for Dudley to die because of police inaction and Canada's national police force should be held accountable not only for Surakka's sake, but for the public at large.

The officer who responded to the 911 call was earlier found guilty of disgraceful conduct during a disciplinary hearing. He lost one day's pay for his mistake investigating the case.

Surakka is attending the hearing, listening intently to the federal government's arguments about why the lawsuit should be dismissed.

Mark and Rosemarie Surakka, the parents of shooting victim Lisa Dudley, outside B.C. Supreme Court on Wednesday. NEAL HALL/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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101A – 2748 Lougheed Highway

RICHMOND
4020 No 5 Road
Aberdeen Centre
Lansdowne Centre
Richmond Centre
Yaohan Centre

SURREY
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12845 – 96th Avenue
9 – 3268 King George Blvd.
7488 King George Highway, Unit 505
7500 Scott Road, Unit 104
1 - 8388 – 128th Street
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Guildford Town Centre
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6338 Fraser Street
8269 Granville Street
215 Keefer Street
3189 Main Street
1211 Pacific Blvd.
481 Robson Street
6596 Victoria Drive
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Looking for tips. Police investigating homicide at Langley grow-op

Homicide investigators are trying to figure out who killed a man at a rural Langley grow-op.

They were called to the home late Tuesday night to check on the man and found him dead inside, clearly having met with foul play. His identity has not been confirmed.

"We are in the early stages of the investigation and processing the crime scene in an effort to determine what occurred inside the residence, including the motive." said Cpl. Adam MacIntosh in a statement.

Police will likely be at the scene for the next couple of days.

If with information is asked to call the IHIT tip line at 1-877-551-IHIT (4448), or email ihittipline@rcmp-grc.gc.ca.

To remain anonymous, please call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or leave a tip on their website at Solvecrime.ca. KATE WEBB/METRO

A member of the RCMP stands guard outside a home in Langley, B.C., Wednesday, where a body was found Tuesday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pivot issues Know Your Rights cards to sex workers

Learning the law.
Legal group hopes to have cards used in different cities, printed in different languages

REBEKAH FUNK
The Canadian Press
exclusively for Metro

The Downtown Eastside Sex Workers United Against Violence Society (SWUAV) and Pivot Legal Society co-host a press conference Wednesday to launch a Know Your Rights card developed for sex workers. ERIC DREGER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Downtown Eastside working girls will now have a pocket-sized card outlining their rights when it comes to dealing with Vancouver city cops.

The Know Your Rights card — a joint initiative of the Pivot Legal Society and Sex Workers United Against Violence Society — responds to new Vancouver Police Department guidelines that bar officers from harassing, arresting or intimidating prostitutes.

Katrina Pacey, with the Pivot Legal Society, says the cards will go a long way towards fostering sex-worker safety and trust of police.

"The police historically have responded by arresting sex workers, displacing them to darker, more isolated areas in the city where there's no one to help them," she said.

"Our hope is that the card will provide consistency between officers, as well as empower sex workers to know they can demand consistency ... and compliance with the policy."

The card encourages sex workers to lodge formal complaints with the Police Complaints Commissioner — or other DTES organizations they trust — if they're targeted, followed, told to move along or arrested by police for prostitution-related offences.

Two thousand cards have been printed for distribution to downtown sex workers. Pacey said she expects they'll expand to other regions and will be printed in other languages.

With support from Vancouver Police Chief Jim Chu, Pivot has written a dozen letters to the RCMP and police headquarters in major cities across Canada urging them to institute similar guidelines for interactions with sex workers.

The initiative builds on findings of the recent missing women's inquiry.

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Liberal MLA no bully for 'morons' email: Premier

Name calling. Clark calls such behaviour 'less than civil' while celebrating Pink Shirt Day at local school

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
phylicia.torrevillas@metronews.ca

Premier Christy Clark joins students of Vancouver's Point Grey secondary school to form a heart Wednesday on Pink Shirt Day, announcing $1 million in grants for 81 school-led anti-bullying projects. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Premier Christy Clark is refusing to call Liberal MLA Kevin Krueger a bully after the latter labelled the B.C. Conservatives "scum" and "morons" in an email.

The Kamloops-South Thompson MLA fired off an email to the Tories Tuesday reacting to a B.C. Conservative party news release that called Jobs Minister Pat Bell an "unmitigated disaster."

The Tories also called for Bell's suspension over allegations the minister made promises to put a developer in a short list for a multimillion-dollar government contract in his Prince George riding.

"It's not appropriate and I don't call people names," Clark told reporters after attending an anti-bullying event at Vancouver's Point Grey secondary school on Pink Shirt Day. "There's a reason I don't call people names. Today of all days, I don't think we want to get political about it."

Clark said she hasn't spoken to Krueger about his comments.

"It's often less than civil. People look at that and it doesn't sit well with them. But I do think bullying is really something specific.… A bully will victimize an individual for personal gratification repeatedly and they will do it with intent to harm." Clark said when asked whether bullying is an issue in provincial politics.

"I guess that happens in every workplace. But I think in politics the issue is more often a matter of uncivil behaviour and not setting a great example for our kids," she added.

The premier, who helped set up pink shirt day in B.C. in 2008 when she was a talk-show host at CKNW, marked the bullying-awareness day by announcing $1 million in grants for 81 school-led projects, including a $15,000 grant to Point Grey secondary.

Mother irate after son brings home graphic flip book

A Vancouver Island mom says she's outraged by a graphic flip book her Grade 8 son brought home from school that creatively shows a woman placing a condom on a man and then having sex.

The booklet, Put on Something Sexy, depicts the sexual act when the pages are flipped rapidly and was given to the boy Jan. 31 as a prize in a sexual-health class, one of three sessions that also covered Internet safety and anti-bullying.

Cathy Sanders said her son showed her the book when he returned home from Nanaimo Wellington secondary school.

"I was disgusted that he would be given something like that," she said.

School officials say they took steps to ensure materials used in the classes are age appropriate, but somehow unsuitable materials slipped through onto display tables used by students.

"There was at least one outside presenter on sexual health," said Donna Reimer, spokeswoman for the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District.

"AIDS Vancouver Island had material they put on the table that students could pick up, if they wish."

Reimer said when an administrator spotted oral-sex pamphlets, they were ordered removed from the display.

The school district wrote a letter of apology to parents, specifically in reference to the pamphlet that explained what oral sex is and how it's performed, which the vice-principal noticed.

But Sanders said the pamphlet, which appeared similar to a medical publication, was less offensive than the flip book.

"I want to know what the (school district) guidelines are and I want materials checked before it goes into classrooms by principals and the school district," Sanders said.

That message appears to have reached educators.

Since then, the school has contacted AIDS Vancouver Island with a request to review all material to be given to students. THE CANADIAN PRESS

In defence

AIDS Vancouver Island defends its use of materials for teaching purposes: "We believe straightforward, non-judgmental information provided to youth, in a context with a facilitator, in a context that speaks to abstinence, is important," said spokesman Eric Brendt.

Obesity rates at an all-time high

Obesity maps. Study shows regional rates across Canada, some with 'alarming' numbers

Obesity rates are higher than ever, especially in certain parts of the country, say researchers who have mapped the changes to illustrate how Canadians' waistlines have expanded over time.

Overall, at least one-quarter of Canadian adults have a body-mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater — putting them in the obese category — concludes a comprehensive study that comes complete with "obesity maps."

"Our analysis shows that more Canadians are obese than ever before — on average, between one-fourth and one-third of Canadians are obese, depending on the region," said principal author Carolyn Gotay of the School of Population and Public Health at the University of British Columbia.

Gotay said mapping regional rates provides more than a decade of easy-to-use visual snapshots that should help researchers, policy makers and the public identify where investments are especially needed to fight the obesity epidemic.

"It seems to tell us that certain areas are definitely experiencing more heavy people," she said from Vancouver. "In certain areas, the percentage of people who are obese is alarming and does have implications for healthcare costs and quality of life down the road."

Being obese can lead to cardiovascular disease, diabetes and certain cancers, among them breast, prostate, colorectal and pancreatic.

The study, published Wednesday in the Canadian Journal of Public Health, used self-reported BMI data from the Canadian Community Health Survey, which researchers adjusted to get more accurate obesity estimates. Over the 11-year study period, the researchers found the greatest increases occurred between 2000 and 2007.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

At least a quarter of Canadian adults are obese, a study finds.

THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Hefty cost

$4.6B

The effects of obesity are indeed expensive: In 2008, they were estimated to cost the Canadian economy $4.6 billion, up about 20 per cent from 2000.

Weigh-in

- **Highs.** The Atlantic provinces, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories had the highest obesity rates between 2000 and 2011, with more than 30 per cent of the population estimated to be obese.
- **Lows.** British Columbia had the lowest overall rates, but obesity still increased from less than 20 per cent to almost 25 per cent in that province. In Quebec, the rate stayed at about 24 per cent.

Expert opinion

Results align with health campaigns

Obesity expert Dr. Mark Tremblay, who was not involved in the study, said the maps give "a nice pictorial summary" of current obesity rates region by region.

"You see across time that the colours get darker or more ominous, showing very effectively visually the transition that's occurred in a rather short period of time," he said Wednesday from Ottawa.

The two territories and the Atlantic provinces have had long-standing problems with obesity among their populations, said Tremblay, director of Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

"In the (Atlantic provinces), they also tend to be less active and less fit. We don't see that same pattern for the North," he said. "Those trends have been there for a while, so I guess what is concerning is that they're not being resolved."

In the 2011 Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card, which Tremblay helped pen, the provinces and territories were given an overall C-minus grade for investment in public-health promotion.

B.C. and Quebec led the pack in per-capita investment. Ontario was No. 3, though at a much lower level than the other two, and the fall-off in dollars spent on health promotion continued from there.

While Tremblay is not saying there is a cause and effect between more money spent on promoting a healthy lifestyle and lower obesity rates, "it's interesting that they align."

Principal author Carolyn Gotay hopes the study will encourage regions to look at their individual rates and come up with programs that target the factors that contribute to obesity within their own populations.

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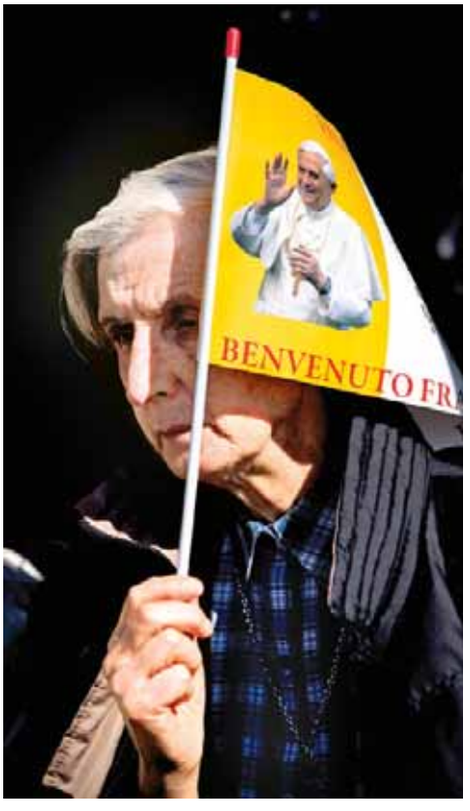

Emotional goodbye

A woman holds a small flag of Pope Benedict XVI with writing in Italian reading "Welcome amongst us" during his last general audience in St. Peter's Square, at the Vatican on Wednesday.

ODED BALILTY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NASA

New telescope measures speed of black hole

There's a new spin on super massive black holes: They're incredibly fast, astronomers say.

It's long been suspected that gigantic black holes lurking in the heart of galaxies rotate faster and grow larger as they feast on gas, dust, stars and matter. But there hasn't been a reliable measurement of the spin rate of a black hole until now.

While black holes are difficult to detect, the region around them gives off telltale X-rays. Using NASA's newly launched NuStar telescope and the European Space Agency's workhorse XMM-Newton, an international team observed high-energy X-rays released by a super massive black hole in the middle of a nearby galaxy.

They calculated its spin at close to the speed of light — 1.08 billion km per hour. This is the first "unambiguous measurement of the spin rate" of a super massive black hole, University of Maryland astronomer Christopher Reynolds, who had no role in the research, wrote in an accompanying editorial.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Corruption case. Former spy-agency watchdog wanted in fraud probe

The man once entrusted to keep an eye on Canada's spy agency is now wanted by police and extradition procedures are underway in the hope of bringing him back to face criminal charges in this country.

An arrest warrant is out for Arthur Porter, the former head of the CSIS watchdog agency, for alleged fraud in one of the country's most expensive infrastructure projects.

He is among the five people named in arrest warrants issued Wednesday by Quebec's anti-corruption squad, in the case of the $1.3-billion construction of a Montreal mega-hospital.

The others are: Former SNC Lavalin senior executives Pierre Duhaime and Riadh Ben Aissa, Yanai Elbaz, and Jeremy Morris, the administrator of a Bahamas-based investment company. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Order of Canada

High honour taken from theatre mogul

Disgraced theatre impresario Garth Drabinsky has been stripped of his Order of Canada appointment and is going to court to fight the decision he says is unfair, considering his imprisonment.

Drabinsky was released to a Toronto halfway house earlier this month. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Recruitment centre

Arrest made in connection to Quebec bombing

A man has been arrested in connection with the bombing of a Canadian Forces recruitment centre in Quebec in 2010, the RCMP said Wednesday. RCMP Cpl. Luc Thibault said four locations that were searched were linked to the Trois-Rivières bombing, which resulted in material damage but no injuries. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Anti-gay activist gets hit with ruling by Canada's top court

Human rights. William Whatcott rapped for two of four pamphlets he distributed

A Saskatchewan anti-gay crusader violated human-rights rules when he distributed some pamphlets denouncing homosexuals, the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled.

In a unanimous 6-0 decision Wednesday, the court found that two of the four flyers distributed by William Whatcott violated Saskatchewan's Human Rights Code. Those flyers referred to gay men as sodomites and pedophiles.

But the court struck down some language in the provincial code, clearing Whatcott of any wrongdoing in connection with two other flyers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Supreme Court decision means Saskatchewan anti-gay crusader William Whatcott will have to pay one complainant $2,500 and another $5,000.

MICHAEL REICHEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sentenced. Fatal crash lands man three years

A man convicted after a crash that killed four high-school football players from northern Alberta has been sentenced to three years in prison.

Brenden Holubowich will also be forbidden to drive for three years once he is released. Holubowich, 23, pleaded guilty to dangerous driving causing death and dangerous driving causing bodily harm. Court of Queen's Bench Justice William Tilleman said determining a sentence for Holubowich might have been the most difficult thing he has ever done.

Tilleman's eyes filled with tears as he told court he sympathized with the dead teens' relatives, who had suggested that a three-year sentence would not be enough. He also said he felt for Holubowich's family. Tilleman said he struggled with his decision and at one point considered a longer period behind bars. But in the end, the judge said, the sentence jointly submitted by the Crown and defence was just and in keeping with similar cases. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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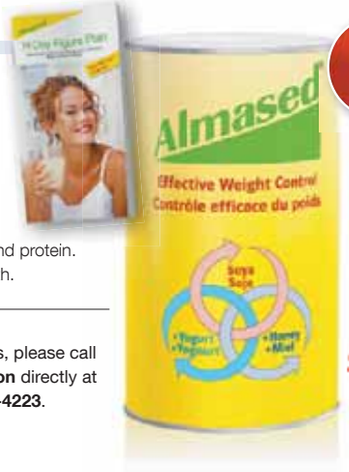

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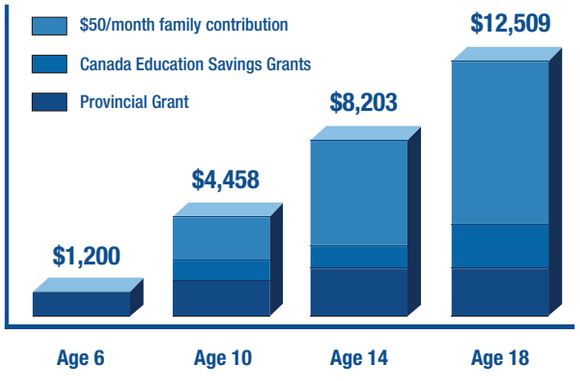

Graph represents the combined dollar total of BC Provincial Grant, Canadian Education Savings Grant and a personal monthly contribution of $50. For more information visit Budget2013.ca

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CANADA STARTS HERE | BRITISH COLUMBIA

BRITISH COLUMBIA

A win for Kelly could move gun control forward

Clear path to Congress. Kelly would replace disgraced former U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr.

Democratic nominee Robin Kelly is set to take a seat in Congress.
CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

An outspoken gun-control supporter is poised to take a seat in the U.S. Congress, and her win in an Illinois primary is seen as a victory as well for the organization founded by New York City's billionaire mayor to counter the country's powerful pro-gun lobby.

Democratic nominee Robin Kelly directly challenged the National Rifle Association in her victory speech Tuesday night. Her Chicago-area district is overwhelmingly Democratic, and she is expected to sail through the April 9 general election and head to Washington. The gun issue has returned to the national spotlight after 20 young children and six adults were killed in a school shooting in December by a man using his mother's legally purchased high-powered rifle.

Vice-President Joe Biden, who has led White House efforts on gun safety, said Wednesday that voters in Kelly's win "sent a clear, unequivocal signal" to the NRA and politicians nationwide. "The message is there will be a moral price as well as a political price for inaction."

Biden met with New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg later Wednesday at the White House. After the meeting, Bloomberg said Kelly's win is a sign of things to come for gun-control legislation.

Kelly, who would replace disgraced former U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., gained huge momentum as Bloomberg's political action committee poured $2 million into anti-gun television ads in her favour. Kelly promised in her victory speech to fight "until gun violence is no longer a nightly feature on the evening news" and directly addressed the NRA, saying "their days of holding our country hostage are coming to an end." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gun-control testimony revisits Sandy Hook

Neil Heslin, the father of a six-year-old boy who was slain in the Sandy Hook massacre in Newtown, Conn., on Dec. 14, holds a picture of himself with his son Jesse and wipes his eye while testifying on in Washington, D.C., Wednesday before the Senate Judiciary Committee on the Assault Weapons Ban of 2013.

SUSAN WALSH/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Swiss set to rethink laws after man's gun rampage

Multiple shootings. Longtime employee dies after killing two with pistol at company in a small town

Fears about U.S.-style mass gun killings gripped Switzerland on Wednesday after a longtime employee opened fire at a wood-processing company.

The shooting left three people dead, including the assailant, in the country's second multiple-fatality shooting in two months.

And it happened as the Swiss parliament prepares to consider tightening some aspects of the country's famously lax gun legislation.

The country has a long-standing tradition for men to keep their military rifles after completing compulsory military service.

This partly accounts for the high rate of gun ownership in the country, where some 2.3 million firearms are owned by a population of about eight million.

On Wednesday, the 42-year-old Swiss man opened fire at the company Kronospan in the small town of Menznau. He drew a pistol and started firing, police said.

Seven people were wounded, six of them seriously.

Officials did not know how the assailant was killed. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police fire at shark as man dies

Amid a frenzy of spray, police in an inflatable life-raft fire shots at a shark as it attacks a swimmer near Auckland, New Zealand. Police said the victim was found dead in the water. ROSS LAND/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New Zealand police fired gunshots at a monster shark on Wednesday in a desperate attempt to save a swimmer.

The four-metre shark "rolled over and disappeared," said police Insp. Shawn Rutene. But the victim, award-winning television and short-film director Adam Strange, 46, didn't survive.

Pio Mose, who was fishing at the popular Muriwai Beach near Auckland, said he saw the swimmer struggle against the huge shark. He yelled at the man to swim to the rocks, but it was too late.

"All of a sudden there was blood everywhere," Mose said. "I was shaking, scared, panicked."

Rutene said police went out in inflatable lifesaving boats and shot at the shark.

Government shark expert Clinton Duffy said New Zealand is a hotspot for great white sharks and other lethal species. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Substance ID'd. Pistorius used a herbal sex aid?

The substance found in the Blade Runner's bedroom after the shooting death of his girlfriend has been named.

Oscar Pistorius' representatives say it was Testis compositum — a herbal remedy for "muscle recovery."

A product called Testis compositum is also marketed as a sexual enhancer. Some online retailers advertise oral and injectable forms.

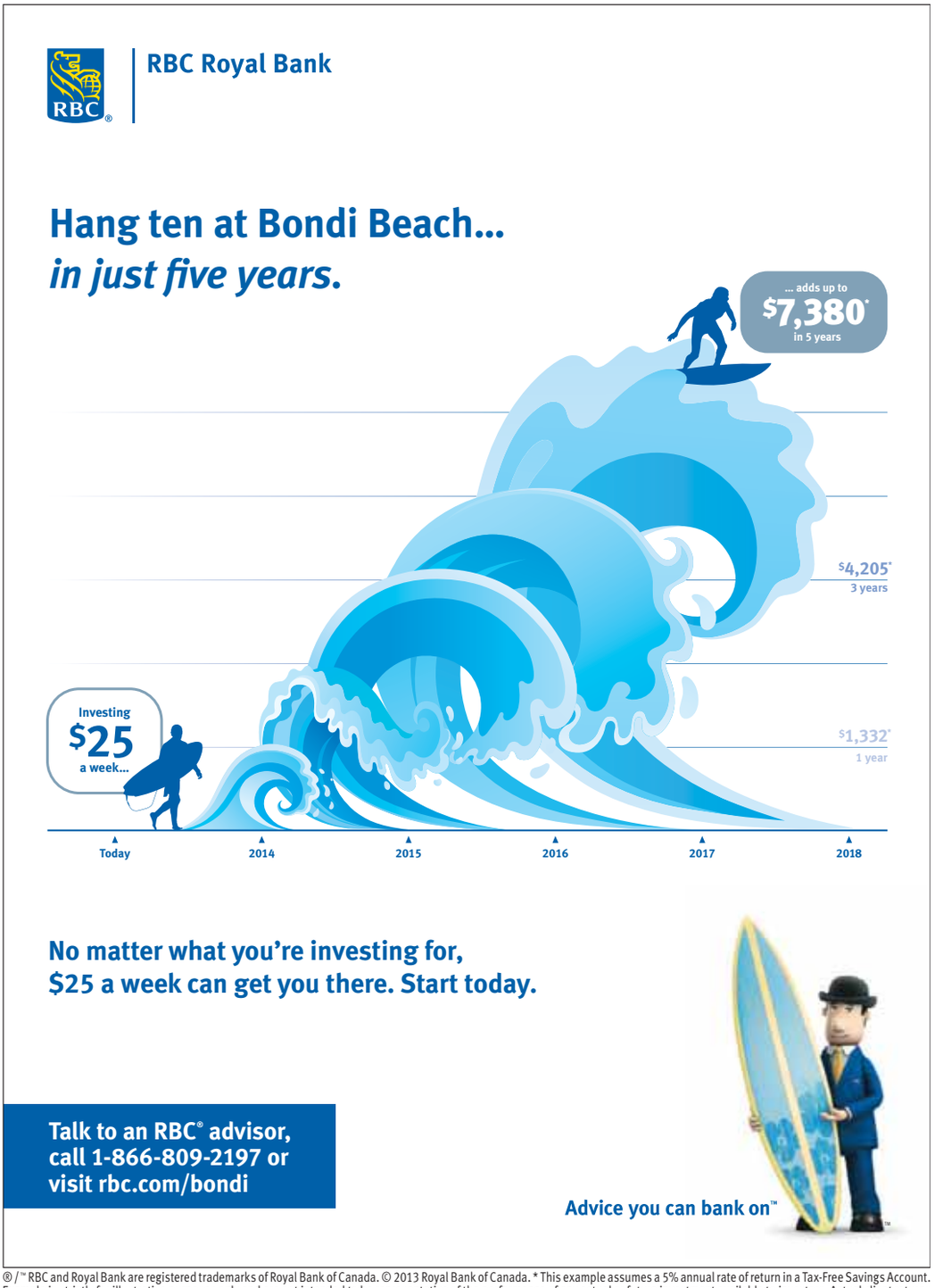
Tablets sold in the U.S. are said to contain 23 ingredients, including pig testicles, pig heart and pig embryo.

Paralympic star Pistorius is charged with murder in the shooting death of girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp.

Prosecutors allege he intended to kill her.

Police took Pistorius for a medical examination when he was arrested on Feb. 14, which included blood-alcohol tests, they said. The substance found in his bedroom was also being tested by police, who haven't released results.

Pistorius, a multiple Paralympic champion, underwent two doping tests in London last year around the Paralympics, the International Paralympic Committee has said. He tested negative for any banned substances in both tests. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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‘Breathable’ nail polish finds an unexpected niche

Surprise solution.
Product developed as healthier alternative to traditional enamel is a hit with Muslim women

For Zaida Saleh, like for many observant Muslim women, manicures have long posed a religious problem.

With prayers five times a day, and a pre-prayer ritual that requires washing the hands and arms, traditional fingernail polish has been mostly off limits because it prevents water from making contact with the nails. A new “breathable” nail polish by a Polish company, Inglot, is changing that.

The company and some Muslims say the polish is the first of its kind because it lets air and moisture pass through to the nail. A craze has built up around it with Muslim women in recent months after an Islamic scholar in the United States tested its permeability and published an article saying that, in his view, it complies with Muslim law.

A manicure in progress at an Inglot shop in Warsaw, Poland. Since an Islamic scholar wrote that, in his view, Inglot’s O2M nail polish complied with Muslim law, the product has become very popular with Muslim women.
CZAREK SOKOLOWSKI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

“It’s huge,” said Saleh, a 35-year-old who hadn’t polished her nails in many years but immediately went out and bought the product in five colours, including a bright pink, a burgundy and a mauve. “I am excited. I feel more feminine — and I just love it.”

The news of Inglot’s breathable polish has spread quickly from woman to woman and over the Internet.

The nail polish now stands as one of the final life achievements of Wojciech Inglot, a Polish chemist and entrepreneur who developed it to create what he billed as a healthier alternative to traditional nail enamels, which block the passage of moisture and oxygen to the nail. He died suddenly on Saturday at the age of 57 after suffering internal hemorrhaging.

Though the Muslim holy book, the Qur’an, does not specifically address the issue of nail polish, some Islamic scholars have said that water must touch the surface of the nail for the washing ritual to be done correctly. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Go ahead — dunk your phone

If you’ve ever seen how unhappy a cellphone can be when it gets soaked, then you might be concerned about the imminent fate of the device pictured above. But this lucky phone is covered with a nano-coating intended to protect consumer electronics from water damage. P2i, which makes the coating, was demonstrating the product Wednesday at the Mobile World Congress trade show in Barcelona.
MANU FERNANDEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EU trade talks

Canada’s banking system negotiable, document shows

A leaked draft of part of the Canada-Europe trade talks shows Canada’s vaunted banking system is on the negotiating table. The Canadian Press has obtained the Feb. 1 version of the services chapter of the Canada-Europe trade deal circulated to EU states. It shows Canada is struggling to maintain the traditional standards it imposes to protect financial services from foreign control and financial instability.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 97.75¢ (+0.32¢)

TSX 12,732.39 (+71.95)

OIL $92.76 US (+13¢)

GOLD $1,595.70 US (-$19.80)

Natural gas: $3.41 US (-5¢)
Dow Jones: 14,075.37 (+175.24)

Beer

Miller plans to end licensing deal with Molson in Canada

Miller Brewing Company says it’s aiming to end its Canadian licensing agreement with Molson Coors Canada this summer.

The agreement covers such well-known brands as Millers Genuine Draft, Miller Lite and Miller High Life. Miller’s managing director for Canada, Paul Gurr, says there’s an opportunity to grow its brands in Canada.

Molson Coors Canada has filed a suit in Ontario to prevent the move but Miller says it gave the required six-month notification in January and it expects the termination to take effect on July 22.

Molson said it plans on “strongly defending (its) rights to market and sell” Miller brands in Canada.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vancity Dash app keeps runners on their game

Tapping into technology has long been part of the routine for runners like Craig Slagel, from using stopwatches to digital music players to sophisticated GPS trackers.

But Slagel wanted a more engaging experience, so the Vancouver-based app developer set to work on a smartphone game he could play while his feet hit the pavement below him.

The result is Vancity Dash, an experimental iPhone and Android app that tracks a runner’s progress using GPS technology, putting the user in the middle of a retro-style video game, complete with low-fi graphics, music and sounds that harken back to the early days of Nintendo and Sega.

Runners collect coins as they go, which users who live in Vancouver can use to unlock local landmarks. Those unlocked landmarks, when a user runs by, provide bonus coins. Anyone using the app outside of Vancouver can collect the coins, but not the landmarks.

The entire game is designed to take place in users’ headphones, allowing them to concentrate on the task at hand: running.

“My running friends are always looking for ways to enhance their running experience, whether it’s music or looking at their GPS or timing themselves,” says Slagel.

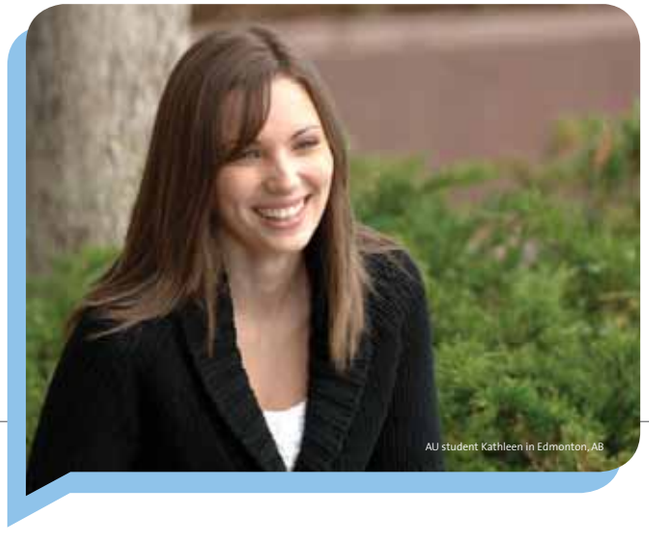
“I thought, ‘How about something that’s a bit more interactive and a little different? Really something to get you out?’”

Vancity Dash is part of a relatively obscure trend of location-based games, which use the GPS information from smartphones and tablets to allow users to interact with the real world.

Slagel created Vancity Dash with two other students who graduated from Simon Fraser University’s digital media master’s program. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

“I love the idea of combining the location technology and the game technology. People are more interactive with their gaming, and I think location is the next level.”
Vancouver-based app developer Craig Slagel



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A GATHERING OF EH?-LIST ACTORS

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

This is the biggest week in the entertainment industry, what with the awards and the stars and the fashions and the national pride: Of course, I'm talking about the first-ever Canadian Screen Awards. What else could I mean?

Oh, right, that Oscars thing.

Hey, the Academy Awards are fine. It's one of the best opportunities to taunt people who are richer, handsomer and more talented than us, and then tsk-tsk their behaviour if they respond with anything but a sexy smile. Such fun.

But shouldn't we get behind Canada's own movies and TV shows just as much as we get behind Hollywood's? This year the Canadian Screen Awards bring the Geminis and Genies together, offering up the coveted Geminenie.

Dull inauguration

I know, I know. You assume that because it's Canadian it must be staid and boring.

I know, I know. You assume that because it's Canadian it must be staid and boring. But I've seen an advanced screening of the awards and I can assure you that, while distinctly Canadian, it also has many familiar echoes to this year's Oscars:

Red carpet. I don't want to give away too much about the glitz and glamour, but David Cronenberg had everybody talking with a sheer blue outfit that left NOTHING to the imagination.

Comedy. The show's host, Martin Short, followed the edgy comedy of recent controversial hosts like Ricky Gervais and Seth MacFarlane, getting in sharp jabs about how he "doesn't care" for the new $20 bill — a sensitive topic (the bill has the Queen on it) that had the audience gasping. After several people called out "too soon!" Short apologized but kept them smiling with a few digs at the Upper Canada rebellion of 1837, something everybody can appreciate.

Lifetime achievement. On the TV side of things, there was a long-standing ovation for Zeddy the Zellers bear, recently retired after 25 years of television commercial performances that the Globe and Mail has called "stunning in their intertwined intimacy and ferocity." Kudos, Zeddy.

Big winners. I'm sworn to secrecy, but these were the nominees for Canadian film of the year:

- **Argo.** The story of a Toronto football team that wins the Canadian Football League trophy entirely because of American bravery and ingenuity.
- **Beasts of the Northern Mild.** A young girl must use all her optimism and imagination when nature flies out of whack and hits Toronto with seven centimetres of snow. With the city in chaos and her dad wailing in annoyance, she heads out in search of her mother, who is at a mysterious and distant shopping mall.
- **Clark.** Daniel Day-Lewis stars as the 16th prime minister of Canada in a country torn asunder by both access-to-information legislation AND a gas tax. Will it survive? Day-Lewis has earned plaudits for his ability to capture Joe Clark's complete lack of charisma.
- **L'eh Misérables.** In this much-loved musical set against the backdrop of the 1995 referendum, French students from Quebec sing about their doomed fight against the federal government in such well-known numbers as On Our Own, One Vote More and Do You Hear the People Secede? Just like secession talk, it's loud, repetitive and goes on far too long.
- **Zero Dark Thirty in Newfoundland.** The thrilling story of a Canadian secret-ops team that kills its targets a half-hour earlier than other countries.

If you want to know who wins, you'll have to watch this Sunday.

Anything can happen, eh?

Exclusively online

- Read more of John Mazerolle at metronews.ca/voices

She's having a whale of a time

RICCARDO TINELLI

Marine photography

Sea dancing with friendly whales

The thought of swimming next to a 35-tonne humpback whale and its calf in the open ocean would fill anyone with dread, but for French navigator Maud Fontenoy, her mind was at ease.

This amazing image shows the 35-year-old marine activist and mother of one snorkelling beside the whales just off the island of Moorea in French Polynesia. METRO

Q and A

MAUD FONTENOY
French sailor and ocean conservation activist

Humpbacks are harmless

Fontenoy — the first woman to have crossed, by rowing, the North Atlantic Ocean and Pacific Ocean, and now a marine conservation activist for UNESCO — spoke to Metro about her swim.

Amazing photo of you with the whales. Were you not frightened of them?
I was afraid at first, but at the same time I knew straight away that these whales mean no harm and that I was in no danger.

I had to abandon my diving equipment on account of the bubbles produced by the breathing device. The whales are noise-sensitive and the bubbles would have disturbed them. Instead, I used a snorkelling mask and flippers.

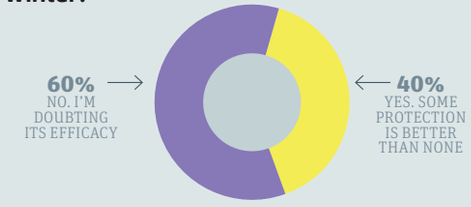
How did this aid your efforts in marine conservation?
Each time we can show the beauty of nature, it's a way to make people aware of the similarity between humans and the ocean.

What everyday task can I do to help conserve our oceans?
You can choose to eat fish that aren't endangered. Also, you can help conserve water by using green detergents for your washing machines and avoiding overpackaged plastic items. METRO

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Will you be getting the flu shot next winter?



Twitter

@Mackinder1861:
Looks Like #onceuponatime is back to filming in #steveston #RichmondBC @VancityFilming pic.twitter.com/Z9OazfiStR

@Dave_Eby:
Dark horse favourite! MT @zulurecords: @Japandroids The House that Heaven Built! New Anthem for @VanCanucks #YVR indie rock landmark moment!

@drosennhl:
Tough news for the Canucks with Ryan Kesler going out for six weeks with a broken foot. Guy can't catch a break. http://bit.ly/YAmBP3

@GregMooredotca:
Everyone was wearing pink at the New Westminster Chamber of Commerce AGM. #pinkshirtday pic.twitter.com/T3amEuPmRC

@streetcrow:
Gather sticks

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SCENE 2

Sherlock fights crime, sings songs in new family musical

Damon Calderwood, left, and Gordon Roberts star in First Impressions Theatre's production of Holmes & Watson Saves The Empire. RYAN CROCKER/SUBMITTED

It's elementary. Dramatic new play Mother Teresa Is Dead also begins this weekend at the Pacific Theatre

BACKSTAGE PASS
Graeme McRanor
vancouver@metronews.ca

Looking to solve your winter boredom? Searching for a few clues that will lead to some good times?

Well, grab your best magnifying glass and head for the hills — it's the Canadian premiere of Holmes & Watson Saves the Empire!

What's that, you ask?

Excellent investigative instincts! It's an uproarious family-friendly musical mystery starring Damon Calderwood and Gordon Roberts as the most famous crime-fighting team in literature.

What are they doing?

Solving crimes, of course! In fact, our fearless duo must save the British Empire from the evil Moriarty — and they only have until midnight to do it!

Insert dramatic music here.

Produced by First Impressions Theatre, the play, which runs until March 16 (Wednesday to Saturday, 8 p.m.) at the Deep Cove Shaw Theatre, also features Chris Robson, Renee Bulat and Kelly Avery. Tickets are $18. ($16 for students.) More information at firstimpressionstheatre.com.

Conscience calling

"Philanthropy is a really boring word ... but actually, 'To give or not to give' is a fundamental question that eats up most of us."

Pacific Theatre artistic director Ron Reed

And now for something completely different:
If you're looking for something a little more dramatic, check out Mother Teresa Is Dead, a play about a young mother who abandons her husband and child and ends up among the street kids of India's slums.

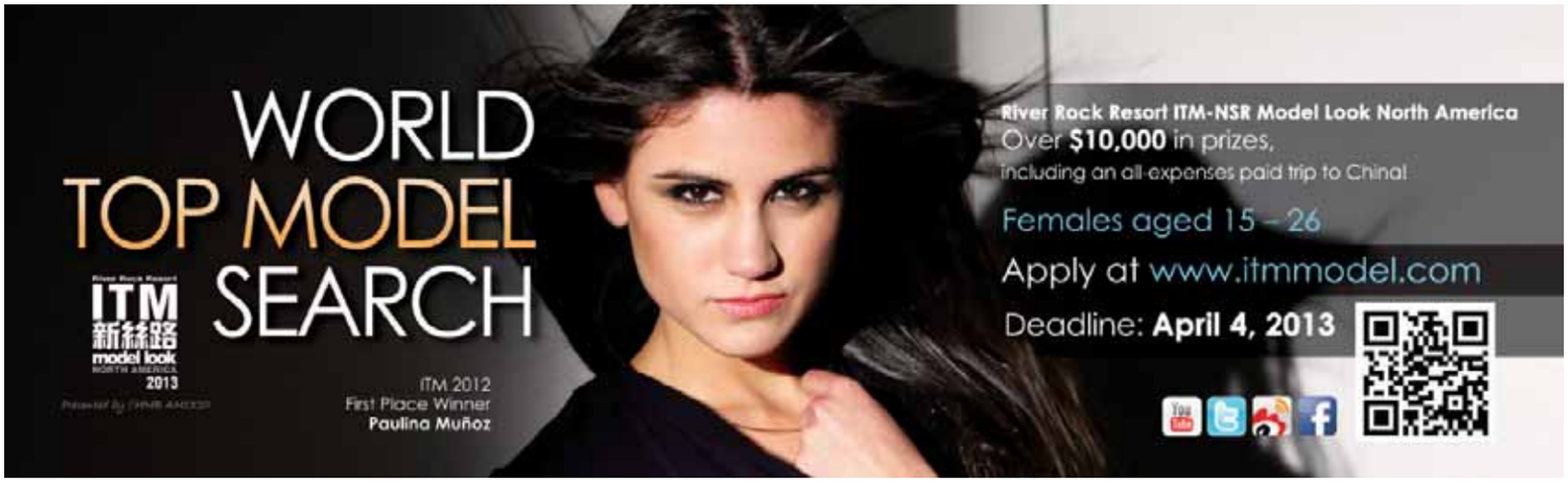
"Philanthropy is a really boring word, and that's why they don't make shows about it," says Pacific Theatre artistic director Ron Reed. "But actually, 'To give or not to give' is a fundamental question that eats up most of us."

Mother Teresa is Dead is produced by Bleeding Heart Collective, comprised of director Evan Frayne (The Verona Project) and actors Julie McIsaac (The Spitfire Grill), Katharine Venour (My Name is Asher Lev), Kayvon Kelly (The Graduate) and Sebastian Kroon (The Busy World is Hushed).

It runs from March 1 to 23 (Wednesday to Saturday, 8 p.m.) at Pacific Theatre. Tickets are $17.99 to $29.99 plus HST. More info at pacific theatre.org.

Even more theatre!

- Pi Theatre presents Terminus, by Irish playwright Mark O'Rowe. His vision of one night in Dublin features singing serial killers, teachers and gangs and demon love. Directed by Richard Wolfe, starring Leanna Brodie. Runs Feb. 28 to March 17 (opening March 1). Tickets begin at $15. More info: pitheatre.com/terminus or call 604-689-0926.



MacFarlane crossed the line, say legislators

Oscars. Family Guy creator's jokes during awards broadcast condemned for 'reducing women to caricatures'

Two female California state lawmakers have condemned Oscar host Seth MacFarlane's comments during Sunday's awards presentation as degrading toward women and asked the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to use better judgment in the future.

Assemblywoman Bonnie Lowenthal and Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson, both Democrats who lead the Legislature's women's caucus, sent a letter to Academy president Hawk Koch on Tuesday, requesting that the organization disavow MacFarlane's behaviour.

They objected to the comedian's focus on the physical appearance of several actresses and quips about nude scenes.

"Furthermore, there was a disturbing theme about violence against women being acceptable and funny," the lawmakers wrote. "From topical jabs about domestic violence to singing about 'boobs' during a film's rape scene, Seth MacFarlane crossed the line from humour to misogyny."

Misogyny?

"...There was a disturbing theme about violence against women being acceptable and funny."

California state women's caucus leaders Bonnie Lowenthal and Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson

MacFarlane's performance has drawn heat from critics since Sunday's show. Blogs compiled highlights of his punch lines, which included a song that referenced leading ladies who have bared their breasts on film that were accompanied by reaction shots from those actresses.

He also made light of a domestic violence incident between rapper Chris Brown and singer Rihanna, and joked about the heavy accents of several Latina actresses.

"On Oscar night, when Hollywood seeks to honour its best, Seth MacFarlane's monologue reduced our finest female actresses to caricatures and stereotypes, degrading women as a whole and the filmmaking industry itself," the letter stated.

Academy spokeswoman Toni Thompson had no immediate comment.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Comedian Seth MacFarlane drew criticism for a number of his jokes during the Academy Awards broadcast Sunday. CHRIS PIZZELO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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www.SensibleBC.ca

Justin Chon (right) reacts to a particularly enthusiastic pool shark in 21 & Over. HANDOUT/JOHN JOHNSON

Party at your own risk: 21 & Over actor takes a beating

Justin Chon. Star of raucous new comedy talks drinking games, stereotypes and gags involving the male anatomy

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

When actor Justin Chon sits down for our interview, he's coughing and looking a little worse for the wear. "I'm good," he insists. "I'm hungover, but I'm good." Promoting a film like 21 & Over — about his college student character's 21st birthday getting out of control, from the writers of The Hangover — can come with its own risks, apparently. But it's all part of the job.

Between being carried around, dropped out windows, Tasered and having a teddy bear glued to your crotch, you're taking the brunt of the abuse in this film.
Yeah. My performance is very much a physical comedic performance, and f—, man. I'm taking a lot of abuse. I mean, my head got hit on doors, I'm getting thrown everywhere.

The worst was (the scene where) we were in a smart car, and I had to be (squashed onto) the f—ing dashboard. To get in like that, I had to twist my neck around. And I'm claustrophobic, so that was the worst.

You also had to do a very painful penis gag, which is a staple for The Hangover guys.
Well, I'm grateful. At least they didn't give me a tiny pee-pee. They were like, "Rest assured, we made you well-endowed." I looked at it and I was like, "Whoa. I don't know if my d— is that skin-tone, but cool."

How are you at drinking games in real life?
I've played them. But I'd much rather just drink, just get to the point. I don't need games. I guess it's just a way of getting people who don't want to drink to drink, but for me I've always been willing. So I'll just get myself drunk. It shouldn't be a punishment. It's a pleasure, it's part of being human. It's part of why we're alive.

Have you seen this movie with an audience yet?
Yeah, I saw a screening with an audience, but I mean, people who go to test screenings, sometimes it's tough to tell because they're kind of willingly going. So I want to see it with an audience who paid money. Because if they're not laughing, we're f—ed.

Suffering for his art

"My head got hit on doors, I'm getting thrown everywhere."
Justin Chon, actor in 21 & Over
explaining the physical demands of his role, which also involves being dropped out of windows and getting Tasered

There's a lot of the humour relating to you being Asian-American. Did anything go too far?
No, and that's what I love about (writers) Jon (Lucas) and Scott (Moore). When we did our first rehearsal, they sat me down and asked me if anything was too far or if anything rubbed me the wrong way. But no, I thought everything was great. I mean, you've got to be able to laugh at yourself. And I think people who take themselves too seriously are just ridiculous. I didn't feel like there were a lot of jokes at the expense of my race.

I've read some of the message boards and they're like, "Great, another stereotype." Dude, this (character) is against the grain. He sucks at school and he likes to party. He's an animal.

So I don't think that's very stereotypical to me. I'm like, "Dude, watch the f—ing movie before you say anything," you know? I'm proud of it. As an Asian-American I think it's a great role, and I fought hard to get it.

Actor turns vain, oversexed character into fan favourite on prime time hit

New Girl. TV show took a chance with over-the-top Schmidt, but Max Greenfield has won over fans and earned award nominations

Max Greenfield, who's been nominated for an Emmy and a Golden Globe for his role as Schmidt on the Fox comedy New Girl, says he isn't worried about being typecast.

The idea makes him laugh.

"I don't think anybody was ever gonna put me in like, Winter's Bone anyway," the 32-year-old actor said in a recent interview. "You know what I mean? I don't think like if they were making a very dramatic, serious movie, they were gonna think, 'You know, I really like Max Greenfield, but Schmidt is just ... it's too much of a THING to put him in that movie.'"

He even took the bit further.

"I don't think they're trying to put me in Saving Private Ryan. (Pauses.) Is that Schmidt?"' he said. "I'm fine. I'm getting to do everything I want to do on this show."

New Girl stars Zooey Deschanel as a young woman with three male roommates, played by Greenfield, Jake Johnson and Lamorne Morris.

Schmidt is a vain, oversexed ladies man with obsessive-compulsive disorder. He makes frequent references to his Jewish heritage. The character could be unlikable, but Greenfield's portrayal of Schmidt makes many viewers root for him.

Quoted

"I don't think anyone was going to put me in like, Winter's Bone anyway."

Max Greenfield on not being worried about whether he is typecast.

Fans tweet Greenfield's lines as Schmidt while the show airs. And Greenfield garners respect from his peers.

"I wanna live in a world where the only person I see or interact with is Schmidt," actress Mindy Kaling tweeted last year. Gwyneth Paltrow wrote in her newsletter, GOOP, that she "fell in TV love" with the character. Greenfield now occasionally contributes to GOOP.

Greenfield worried before New Girl debuted in 2011 that viewers would dislike Schmidt.

"I thought, 'There's a good chance that I'll never work again after this.' I mean, we've played him in such a way that this could go terribly wrong, and then we started to air and the response was so positive. It kind of affirmed all the things that the writers were doing, all the things that I was doing. I think it said to everyone, 'We're on the same page. We can keep moving forward.' And then they just went crazy with it."

Schmidt's first name hasn't been revealed, and Greenfield hopes it never will be, unless it's done in a clever way, like if the character gets married.

"I'm just thinking of this now, but what a smart move this would be. 'Will you (first name) Schmidt take ... ' and that's the moment she goes, 'That's your first name?' That would be a nice moment. Under a chuppah."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Actor Max Greenfield from the Fox comedy series New Girl.
DAN HALLMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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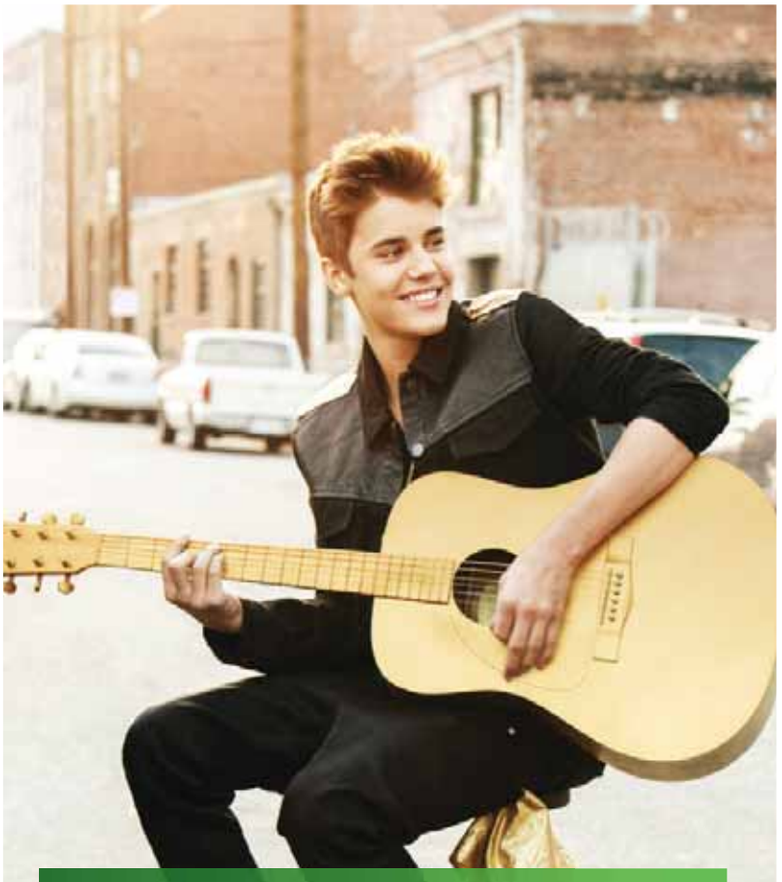

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2. Upload your photos by visiting www.clubmetro.com/Justin
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The persuasive power of the romance film

Alden Ehrenreich and Alice Englert are the multi-talented leads of the new film Beautiful Creatures. HANDOUT

Beautiful Creatures.

Co-stars needed a second pitch to join the cast

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

It took a lot of convincing for young co-stars Alden Ehrenreich and Alice Englert to sign onto Beautiful Creatures, the movie adaptation of the popular young adult romance novel by Kami Garcia and Margaret Stohl.

In fact, both Ehrenreich and Englert initially passed on the project. "The reason I didn't want to be a part of it was the way that it had been pitched to me—it didn't sound like its own movie," Ehrenreich explains. "It sounded like they were just trying to capitalize on this genre, and because of that it wouldn't be something that was personal."

But a second look at the script and a sit-down with writer-director Richard LaGravenese helped persuade Ehrenreich, who got his start in the 2009 film Tetro, directed by Francis Ford Coppola.

Badly drawn boy

Englert insists she's not the only artist in the cast, citing Ehrenreich's drawing and painting abilities — something LaGravenese boasts of as well. "He does these great ugly drawings of people, which are great," Englert says. "They are. No one looks good in an Alden drawing." Ehrenreich confirms this fact. "No, no one does," he says. "My mom has been very upset with me for them."

"He kind of explained to me that everyone he had assembled at that point with the cast and the crew, everyone was intent on making a movie like this but in a way that you hadn't seen before and with more intelligence and humour than you usually see," Ehrenreich says. "So that really appealed to me, and then I was just so grateful that I was still able to get in the film."

That initial hesitation to wade into the Twilight-like young adult waters also helped Ehrenreich and British co-star Englert bond.

"We both had a mutual respect I think because of that skepticism we'd both had originally about the project," he says. "And Richard liked that about us and we liked that about each other."

One thing Englert doesn't like, though, is that people keep calling her a poet, thanks to stories LaGravenese has been telling about her.

"I scribble in a notebook. I'm just like a normal 18-year-old girl," she says, apparently downplaying the notion. "This is the thing, I would never possibly be able to say that. I love poetry, I'm very passionate about it, so I'm all the more embarrassed to think that people think I call myself that."

But Englert is definitely a singer-songwriter. A track she wrote while filming the movie made it onto the Beautiful Creatures soundtrack.

"It was amazing. I mean, just like one of those things that you can't really hope for," she says. "I recorded it in the bathroom of the apartment I was staying in the warehouse district of New Orleans on Garageband on a computer. And then Richard heard it and liked it and we re-recorded it, but then he wanted to use my terrible bathroom version. So that's in the film."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Carrie Fisher lands in hospital after strange cruise ship mishap

Star Wars star Carrie Fisher was reportedly hospitalized following a bizarre surprise appearance on a cruise ship, according to TMZ. "There was a medical incident related to Carrie Fisher's bipolar disorder," her rep says. "She went to hospital briefly to adjust her medication and is feeling much better now." Attendees at the show report that Fisher was meandering about on stage, rambling incoherently and singing off-key while her dog relieved itself next to her.

Carrie Fisher

Michael Sheen and Rachel McAdams ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Another one bites the dust

Rachel McAdams and Michael Sheen have reportedly called it quits after more than two years of dating, according to Us Weekly. McAdams and Sheen first met while filming Woody Allen's Midnight in Paris together, though they didn't begin dating until later. "Michael and I didn't get together while we were filming Midnight in Paris, which I feel strongly about not doing when I'm working," McAdams told Stella magazine last year. "We became quite good friends, which I think is a great way to start." There was no word as to what led to their breakup. McAdams previously dated Ryan Gosling for two years after co-starring with him in The Notebook.

The Word

Are Hemsworth and Cyrus done? Is Jones to blame?

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Attention Liam Hemsworth. If you're going to cheat on fiancée Miley Cyrus, don't do it at the Chateau Marmont. The Los Angeles hotel swarms daily with paparazzi and gossips; it's akin to taking out a billboard on I-95. Here's the dirt: Hemsworth (a.k.a. Mr. Miley To-Be) was seen getting "hot and heavy" with January Jones at a pre-Oscar party over the weekend, per Star magazine. "It looked like they had some hot chemistry," an eyewitness told the rag. "They were all over each other — and they even kissed!" For her part, Cyrus showed up at the Elton John AIDS Foundation's viewing party sans date on Sunday and "was all over the place" (code for wasted). So what does this mean? I'm not sure. All I know is that Hemsworth is 23, while Cyrus is 20. Sounds like appropriate behaviour for people barely out of their teens.

Twitter

@katyperry
If I were a cookie, I would be a thin mint girl scout cookie. FYI

@LilTunechi
Dam pit bull bro I thought u was kool.

@johncusack
Spell check hates me - always has

@RebelWilson
I got action onset with @channingtatum today. He is pure man steak luscious

Jennifer Lawrence

Is Jennifer Lawrence complaining?

There's no rest in sight for Oscar winner Jennifer Lawrence, who got right back in Hunger Games mode the day after nabbing a best actress statue. After filming the next film in the successful franchise, she's set to re-team with Silver Linings Playbook co-star Bradley Cooper and director David O. Russell in an FBI drama before putting on blue body paint for the next X-Men movie, which begins shooting in May. But all Lawrence wants to do is chill out. "I want to sit on my couch and drink and not change my pants for days," she tells E! News.

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While the start of the new season is still several weeks away, there's no reason you can't leap ahead on the calendar — at least fashionably speaking — by adding a touch of spring style to your winter wear. LouLou style editor Claude Laframboise says spring pieces are great for layering during winter, like wearing sleeveless or short-sleeved tops under jackets or cardigans. Here are five ways to dial up the warmth in your cold-weather looks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Spring into winter

Pretty prints

It wouldn't be spring without a little flower power, and fashionable florals will once again be in full bloom — with a stylized update, of course. "What's newer is the bigger-scale floral print as opposed to the small dainty one," said Laframboise.

Many prints are also drawing inspiration from digital imagery, making them appear pixelated, reminiscent of an abstract print.

Torn between sporting stripes or polka dots? No need to choose when you can wear different patterns together. Laframboise said the mixing of prints was an evolution of colour blocking, which involves teaming distinctive bright hues within one ensemble.

Individuals can get a jump start on spring now by trying their hand at combining seemingly contrasting prints — keeping in mind that complementary colours are key.

Black and white

The classic colour pairing made a splash on the spring runways and may be among the easiest trends to work into your wardrobe.

"It's not about wearing a white shirt and black pants," said Laframboise. "It's really about wearing a striped top with solid pants, or a crisp white shirt, but with a patterned skirt that would be black and white."

Laframboise said the pairing also acts as a good base for bright hues, like teaming a black-and-white striped top with another on-trend item like electric blue or hot pink jeans.

Expect to see many of the season's key prints like stripes, polka dots and floral prints steeped in black and white, he said.

Laframboise suggested opting for a heavier-weight striped jersey dress now, or perhaps sporting a silky, polka-dotted top under a jacket and wear it standalone in spring.

A model wears a bird print top ($36), skinny leg denim ($46), bracelets ($10) and a wedge sandal ($40) from Reitmans.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bright and light

Vibrant hues that coloured last year's spring fashions continue to be a strong theme heading into the warmer months. But no need to feel stuck on selecting one "it" colour. There's a full spectrum of bold shades to choose from.

"Some colours stick out," said Laframboise. There's a lot of hot pink, hot orange, turquoise and electric blue. "But it's not one of those seasons where there's one colour you must get. It's all about colour as a whole."

An easy way to adopt the trend without sacrificing comfort is to consider opting for a brightly-coloured pair of jeans, said Laframboise.

Finishing touches

From a coral clutch to a checkered handbag, some of the hot colour and pattern trends in apparel are translating to accessories.

Mixed metal statement jewelry is emerging for spring, with everything from rhinestones to neon colours in the mix, said Laframboise.

Consider pairing your statement necklace with a T-shirt and jeans, or even overtop a collared shirt that has been fully buttoned up, he suggested.

"It's gone from being something dressy that you have at night to the other way around."

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SELLERS REMAIN PATIENT

FEWER HOMES ON THE MARKET IN GREATER VANCOUVER

GOODSHOOT/THINKSTOCK

Prospective homeowners have left for greener pastures in the past few months, cooling down the Greater Vancouver real estate market in an almost record fashion.

In the last four months consecutively, overall sales and home listings have continued to dip, according to the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (REBGV).

"It appears many home sellers are opting to remove their homes from the market rather than settle for a price they don't want," REBGV president Eugen Klein says in its monthly report posted Feb. 4.

The REBGV reported last month's sales were the second lowest January total since 2001, and 18.7 per cent below the 10-year sales average for the month.

The January home price index has $588,100 posted in sales using the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), a 0.5 per cent decrease since last month, a 4.5 per cent decrease in the last six months and an overall 2.8 per cent decrease in sales from this time last year.

It seems instead of settling for lower prices, home sellers would rather keep their properties off the market and wait for the downward trend to buck, the REBGV reports.

New home listings for detached, attached and apartment properties in the Greater Vancouver area reached a total of 5,128 in January. Compared to this time last year there were 5,756 new listings, bringing the decline to 10.9 per cent over last year.

"When a home seller isn't receiving the kind of offers they want, there comes a point when they decide to either lower the price or remove the home from the market. Right now, it seems many home sellers are opting for the latter," Klein says.

An analysis from the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) from April 2012 states Vancouver home prices on average are far too high for the average person.

In the report written by Robert Hogue, senior economist for RBC, he states, "A typical Vancouver-area homebuyer would need to allocate 92 per cent of their income to carry the costs of a two-storey home (based on market price) and almost 45 per cent for a condominium apartment.

"Needless to say, these represent very difficult financial hurdles for ordinary households to clear and demand for housing being restrained as a consequence," he says.

– Sam Smith

CONTRIBUTED

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Those who qualify for Sequel 138's down payment assistance program can own a home in this development west of Main Street for $0 down.

Sequel 138 Development Corp. is offering buyers an equity loan of up to 10 per cent of the purchase price. There are no monthly payments to make and there is no interest. Buyers simply pay back 10 per cent of the sale price whenever they sell the unit.

"We've recognized that there is quite a number of barriers to buying a home in Vancouver," says developer Marc Williams, adding that Vancouver's high rental prices "can make it difficult for renters to save enough for a down payment."

The project's 79 one- and two-bedroom suites appeal to a diverse group of buyers who aspire to live in the area where they work: From public servants and health-care professionals, to those in the non-profit and creative sectors.

To learn more about Sequel 138's equity down payment assistance program, email info@sequel138.com, or call 604-628-7356.

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ENJOYING LIFE AT THE TOP

3 CIVIC PLAZA WILL BE TALLEST BUILDING IN SURREY

Century Group is reaching new heights with 3 Civic Plaza — the tallest building in heart of Surrey with a new hotel, office and residential tower.

The building boasts 353 larger-than-usual residential suites ranging from 520-square-foot single-bedroom homes to 1,223-square-foot two-bedroom homes with den.

Each home is spacious and comfortable, with gourmet kitchens, premium energy-efficient appliances and hotel quality washrooms.

The building will also heated by an advanced city-owned energy system, which will provide the domestic hot water supply for the entire building and use water to regulate temperature through in-slab radiant heating and ventilation.

Amenities include a gym, swimming pool, a rooftop garden on top of the hotel, a café and restaurant, and a number of curated shops on the ground level. But 3 Civic Plaza takes being a resident to the next level by providing residential concierge and à la carte services.

David Laulainen, director of communications and business development for Century Group, is excited to share the vision for homeowners.

"Imagine coming home after a long day and you just want to relax," Laulainen says. "Grab your iPad, check out the menu downstairs and have your food delivered to your suite."

But that's not all.

"Friends coming over? Don't have time to clean? Just call down for housekeeping and you're good to go," he says.

However, just because amenities are built-in, does not mean owners will have to opt in.

Century Group will own and operate the Civic Hotel, which gives the management team a chance to program and oversee the amenities available to residents and hotel guest alike.

"Owners can choose the services they want," he says.

And you can't beat the location. 3 Civic Plaza is at the core of a new Surrey City Centre, connected to the City Centre Library, a new city hall, a performing arts centre, SFU Surrey campus, Surrey Central SkyTrain, Central City Shopping Centre, and more.

Basically, everything you will need is just a short walk away.

For more, visit 3CivicPlaza.ca.

REINVENTING SURREY'S DOWNTOWN CORE

COST – Residential units start at the mid-$200,000s to the upper $300,000s.
TIME – 3 Civic Plaza is set to start construction this summer with a scheduled completion for late 2015.
WHO – Developed by Century Group, in partnership with the Surrey City Development Corp., and in collaboration with Cotter Architects and ZGF Architects.
LOCATION – Surrey, as Century Group puts it, is on the rise. It's on course to be larger than Metro Vancouver in the next 10 to 15 years with major investment in the city going on right now. As Sean Hodgins, president of Century Group says, Surrey is doing the seemingly impossible by reinventing its downtown core. A sight seldom seen in Canada and the US, and they are going to be right there as it happens.

CENTURY GROUP BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

It's often said that people need to build a better future, but Century Group decided to take that phrase and apply it literally to its business.

With 3 Civic Plaza, Century Group is building a mixed-use residential and commercial transit-oriented development — a way of designing a building to easily access all the amenities needed in life, without leaving a nasty carbon footprint.

In other words, a home where you don't need a car to get to work, get your groceries, or enjoy a night out with friends. An all-in-one unique environment to meet the needs of the average person.

"Energy-efficient, transit-oriented projects are the way of the future," says David Laulainen, director of communications and business development for Century Group. "We focus on developing areas where you won't need a car to get the things you need."

3 Civic Plaza is located on a public transportation hub 33 minutes from downtown Vancouver via SkyTrain.

Surrounding the building is a planned performing arts centre, shopping centre, university and a new Surrey city hall. The building is directly adjacent to the Surrey Central SkyTrain Station.

This means you can get all you need within minutes of walking distance from your door. "Seven minutes in any direction will get you to the gym, or the grocery store, or to a SkyTrain to get to work," Laulainen says.

It's this philosophy that Century Group has expanded upon in its "Century Thinking builds communities" mantra — creating places that define neighbourhoods, places with walkable streets where people live, shop and work, and places connected to natural landscapes. And they want others to follow suit.

But it's not always just about location. It's also about how the buildings are designed.

"We need to make development projects sustainable," Laulainen says. "We need to be conscious of how we use energy, how we conserve energy, and how we live our lives."

Designing buildings where it's easy to do so is the perfect launching pad to make a better world.

To learn more about Century Group, visit centurygroup.ca.

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ISTOCK

STYLISH TOUCHES

FLIP CONDO WITH THESE HELPFUL TIPS

DESIGN CENTRE
KARL LOHNES
HOME@METRONEWS.CA

We all know the rules when prepping your home for resale: De-clutter, remove personal items and clean. However, there are more things you can do to make your home the talk of your building.

You can always hire a home stager (usually recommended from the selling agent) to help, but as your trusted decorator expert, I will share my own tricks of the trade to get your place appealing to a new buyer.

Buy accessories that complement the space you are selling, and not what you think is trendy at the moment. Putting your decor trademark on a space is not going to make buyers see the potential of owning it themselves. For instance, if you live in a modern condo with concrete ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows, choose a few strong industrial accents to play up those features — tall clear glass vases, a factory cart coffee table and vintage metal cappuccino maker will help give off that urban vice.

As harsh as this may be, paint away your personality with an updated neutral wall colour. Choose a colour that works with your floor and not necessarily your existing furniture in case you have already moved out and a potential buyer only has the walls and floors to see. The right colour will ensure that without furnishings the space still looks co-ordinated and tied together.

In an empty, open-concept space, use area carpets to define living areas. This way potential buyers can imagine a living, dining and office without them in such an open area.

Choose your view to help with the sell. Install woven scrim shades to hide a bad view, yet let light into the room. If you have a great city view, then keep the shades up to show it off. Any window in a bathroom or bedroom should offer a privacy shade.

Lower your artwork. Buyers want spaces with high ceilings, so, by lowering your artwork the ceilings look taller. Simply lower everything two inches — ideally, the middle of your artwork should be 66 inches off the floor. This is a great trick in condos and lower-level spaces that might only have standard height ceilings.

A new sink, faucet and trend-setting laminate countertop can take 10 years off the age of your kitchen.

SET THE TONE

One trendy countertop appliance can set the tone for a fabulous lifestyle to potential buyers; and the best part, you can take it with you when you move. Nespresso's Maestria Creama C Five Hundred Crema, $550, is available at thebay.com.

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VIBRANT VINEGAR

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ISTOCK

Vinegar's high acidity level makes it effective for killing mould, bacteria and germs. Regular distilled white vinegar is more than sufficient for most jobs, but for really gross messes, get extra punch by increasing the acidity — pickling vinegar, for example, is seven per cent acidity instead of the average five per cent.

VINEGAR IN THE KITCHEN

Freshen sponges and dish rags by soaking them overnight in a quarter cup of white distilled vinegar and just enough water to cover them. Throw them in the wash and they are as good as new.

Remove soap buildup and odours from the dishwasher by running an empty machine with one cup of white distilled vinegar. Similarly, loosen grime and tackle microwave odour by bringing a bowl of vinegar and water solution to a rolling boil in the microwave for three minutes.

VINEGAR IN THE BATHROOM

Remove soap buildup with a non-toxic scouring solution. Mix one part salt to four parts white distilled vinegar and say goodbye to soap scum naturally.

Deodorize the toilet bowl and leave it sparkling by soaking the basin with three cups white distilled vinegar for half an hour before scrubbing and flushing

VINEGAR IN THE LIVING ROOM

Enjoy crystal-clear windows with equal parts vinegar and water. The first time you try this, chemical residue from your old cleaner might leave streaks. Cut through the grime by spraying with undiluted vinegar.

VINEGAR IN THE LAUNDRY ROOM

Reduce static without chemical-laden dryer sheets by adding half a cup of vinegar to the rinse cycle of your washing machine. As an added benefit, this will preserve the colour of your clothes.

DEAL DIRECTLY WITH ODOUR SOURCE

CHARLES THE BUTLER
ASKCHARLESTHEBUTLER
@METRONEWS.CA
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CHARLESMACPHERSON.COM

HELLO MR. BUTLER,

I don't know what to with the odours in shoes, suitcases and sporting equipment bags. This is driving me crazy. Any ideas and/or suggestions please.

Thank you,
Picky Nose Lady

A: Well I do understand, odours can be most disruptive and annoying. So let's look at your list — first, shoes. If it is a running shoe then a small sprinkle of baking soda in each shoe will help absorb the odour caused by the moisture. Drying antistatic sheets will also help. But take a good look at the shoes — running shoes in particular do have a lifespan and once they are done, they are done.

Suitcases are always great with dryer antistatic sheets, but after a long trip, if possible, always leave the suitcase open for a day or two to fully air it out.

And, finally, sports equipment bags also need to be aired out regularly and the sports equipment needs to be washed after each and every use. I know that sounds like a lot, but this is really important to keep the bacteria level down, which reduces odour and avoids skin irritations.

But remember, the most important part is that you need to deal with the odour source to get rid of it, not just mask it with fake perfume smells.

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BOSA: QUALITY FROM INSIDE OUT

DESIGN, DETAILS ADD PERFECT TOUCH

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Downtown Vancouver is full of developed, high-density neighbourhoods, so there's not much room to build new developments from the ground up, says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager at Bosa Development.

That's why developers like Bosa are finding creative ways to bring new condos into the existing landscape, she says.

Bosa's newest development, Pacific Point in Yaletown, is just such a project. President Nat Bosa purchased a pre-existing condo tower last April and has completely transformed and modernized every unit, Murrell says.

"It was time for a refresh," she says.

The building is about 20 years old, but the interiors are 100 per cent modern.

"Essentially, it's a brand new building on the inside," Murrell says. "Residents will be able to enjoy these beautiful new condominiums in a neighbourhood that has a ton of character."

The 28-storey tower on Homer Street, a half-block north of Pacific Boulevard, has 214 units including studios, one-bedroom and dens, junior two-bedroom and dens, two-bedroom and dens and penthouse suites. Sizes range from 448 to 1,678 square feet. Every unit is professionally designed with a colour scheme in latte or grey by Cristina Oberti, with flooring in laminate wood, porcelain tile and deep, durable carpet. Details like custom roller blinds and solid wood front doors give the homes a feeling of quality.

Armony Cucine cabinetry from Italy creates clean lines in the kitchens and bathrooms, along with a quartz slab backsplash, polished quartz countertops and sleek undermounted sinks.

"The simplicity of the design makes each unit easy to customize, and the floor-to-ceiling windows in the dens are something to see," Murrell says.

The kitchens are eminently practical with useful details including under-cabinet task lighting, soft-close doors and drawers, and an Energy Star stainless steel appliance package in the kitchen.

The theme of efficiency continues in the bathrooms, which have low-flow Kohler shower heads and toilets, deep soaker tubs, and glass-enclosed showers in selected ensuites. The suites each come with a full-sized stacking washer and dryer.

Prices range from $385,000 to $950,000, with penthouse pricing to be released. Public previews begin March 2 at 1323 Homer St. The units will be move-in ready in May.

For more, visit pacificpointcondos.com.

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Yaletown has it all — a downtown lifestyle and a neighbourhood feel, with green space and views of the water to spare.

The neighbourhood is a major factor in the appeal of Pacific Point, says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager at Bosa Development.

Bosa's newest residential project is within walking distance of world-class shopping, restaurants and nightlife, with a wealth of leisure and fitness activities to choose from in the area.

Once a warehouse district, Yaletown has undergone a renaissance over the last 30 years. Its historic brick buildings have been preserved and renovated to produce modern homes and businesses with character.

The high concentration of tech companies and exciting start-ups that the neighbourhood has become known for have fed its culture, making Yaletown the location of choice for many a business lunch, gourmet dinner, or casual beer after work.

Annual Yaletown festivals like Taste of Yaletown mean there's always something fun going on nearby. The Roundhouse Community Centre, Contemporary Art Gallery and other local organizations host regular events and exhibitions.

Opportunities to get outdoors abound. Several well-maintained green spaces are just steps away, including David Lam Park and George Wainborn Park. Pacific Point is located right next to the Seawall, a scenic waterfront pathway to walk, run or roll all the way around downtown Vancouver.

When Pacific Point residents need to venture farther afield, the Canada Line SkyTrain and major bus routes are a short walk away.

But residents don't need to leave home to enjoy their neighbourhood. Local food specialty retailers and grocery stores like Urban Fare make it easy to channel your inner chef at home.

Guests will be impressed by the views, Murrell says. Many Pacific Point units have "unobstructed panoramas of the parks, False Creek, English Bay and the downtown skyline," she says.

Getting a workout at home is possible, too. Amenities at Pacific Point include a lap pool, hot tub and sauna, a fitness studio and yoga area, his and hers change rooms, and a residents lounge with a pool table. "It's ideal for those rainy days you just don't want to leave the house," Murrell says.

THE VISION

If you are buying a condo, make sure the developer has a history of well-made projects, says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager at Burnaby-based Bosa Development.

President Nat Bosa has overseen the design and construction of tens of thousands of homes across North America over the past four decades, including recent Vancouver projects Citygate near False Creek and Portico off South Granville.

"It's important for a developer to have a vision right from the get-go," Murrell says. A cohesive idea of what the project should be keeps continuity throughout the design and construction phases, inside the homes and out, she says.

"Nat makes sure buyers are satisfied from the day they buy through to many years down the road," she says. "For him, sharing that vision and developing that trust with customers is key."

Bosa Development offers a high level of after-sale service. The company was founded on the principle that people should love their homes for the long term, she says.

PACIFIC pt.

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THE BOSA LEGACY

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

AT THE TOP OF METROPOLIS

It's not called Metropolis for nothing. With almost 400 shops and services inside, and many more residential, office and commercial spaces in the neighbourhood, Metropolis at Metrotown Mall is Burnaby's downtown.

Luckily for the future residents of Silver, a new condo development by Intracorp, it's a neighbourhood that's incredibly convenient and full of life.

"Metrotown is a great location to live in Metro Vancouver," says Barrett Sprowson, director of sales at Intracorp. "It's right on the SkyTrain line and there are so many great shops and services all around."

The convenience factor is clear, he says. Metrotown and the surrounding walkable area offers an abundance of things to see and do. The wide choice of grocery, clothes and homewares stores, including the Real Canadian Superstore and T & T Supermarket, helps shoppers find what they are looking for.

"There's a real diversity in Burnaby," Sprowson says. "The city is a place you want to get out and explore."

Silver residents can catch the latest movies at Metrotown's SilverCity movie theatres nearby, and grab a bite at a diverse range of cafés and restaurants, from large chains like Cactus Club to small, bustling bubble-tea shops and sushi joints.

Take a walk, run or bike ride at Burnaby's Central Park, and stop by Central Park Pitch & Putt for a round of golf. For those who want to practise their swing, lessons are available for all ages.

The Burnaby Public Library main branch and Bonsor Recreation Centre are steps away. The public recreation complex runs a wide range of programs and is equipped with squash and basketball courts, a swimming pool, an outdoor field, a workout area with weights and cardio machines, and fitness, dance, and martial arts studios for group classes.

The investment opportunity at Silver isn't bad either, Sprowson says. Maclean's ranked Burnaby the best-run city in Canada in 2009, thanks to the city's burgeoning economy, plentiful parks and green spaces, active cultural scene and myriad well-run public services.

The investment just got better for a limited time. Now buyers can take advantage of up to $20,000 in incentives when they purchase a one-bedroom home. Explore the offer, called Silver's Ultimate Home Experience, at silverliving.ca.

BUILDING A NEIGHBOURHOOD

"We wanted to create a development that added to the neighbourhood," says Barrett Sprowson, director of sales at Intracorp.

In addition to having large outdoor patios and balconies to enjoy at Silver, residents will be able to take advantage of the surrounding neighbourhood space. The development will include street-level townhomes and retail spaces on a broad, pedestrian-oriented boulevard.

The concept was designed by Neale Staniszkis Doll Adams (NSDA) Architects, the architects behind Silver who have received the Lieutenant Governor's Award six times for their diverse, innovative projects.

"The idea is to create a public space that's welcoming for residents and the community," Sprowson says, adding that Silver residents will be able to take a trip to the corner store for necessities, or to the neighbourhood café for a coffee with friends.

"Intracorp creates homes that are designed to fit with and enhance their neighbourhoods," Sprowson says. "Silver is a great example of that."

HOMES WITH BALANCE

We all want a happy, balanced life, but sometimes it takes a herculean effort to balance every task needed in a typical day. That's why a home needs to be a place that relaxes and restores, according to Barrett Sprowson, director of sales at Intracorp.

"We all need convenience, but we also don't want to lose out on the enjoyable things in life," he says. The condos at Silver were designed to help residents balance both.

"We've put a lot of thought into creating spaces and amenities that residents can come home to and feel like a weight has been lifted off their shoulders," he says.

Convenience was the No. 1 consideration. The units in the 38-storey tower are designed to maximize storage and usability. A stackable washer and dryer deliver maximal practicality in minimal floor space. A stainless steel dishwasher, refrigerator, under-mount sink with vegetable spray, hood fan and self-cleaning, glass-front wall oven make cooking simple.

The homes' laminate hardwood, porcelain tile and low-profile carpet are sleek and easy to maintain.

Beauty was an important factor, too. Homes at Silver were outfitted by interior design firm BBA Design Consultants in two simple colour schemes, light and dark. They include subtle stylish details like marble shower tiles, composite stone countertops and backsplashes, and Italian Armony Cucine cabinets.

Another bonus of living at Silver is its views, Sprowson says. The high elevation of the Metrotown area affords panoramic views, of which Silver's expansive windows take full advantage.

The sports-themed entertainment lounge and outdoor fireplace lounge provide residents lots of space for big get-togethers.

Floor plans range from 616 square feet, and costs range from $356,900 for one-bedroom homes and from $425,900 for two-bedroom homes. Penthouse prices are available upon request.

Visit silverliving.ca to experience 360-degree views from Silver and for animated tours of the interiors in both colour schemes.

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SILVER

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INTRACORP
BUILDING THE EXTRAORDINARY

Intracorp Silver Avenue Limited Partnership

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

PAMPER YOURSELF IN HIGH STYLE

The resort-inspired amenities at Surrey's Park Avenue bring the spa to residents' doorsteps.

Park Avenue, the newest addition to the master-planned Park Place Community in Surrey's city centre, will take residents to their happy places, according Isaac Chan, sales director at Concord Pacific.

"When you get home from work, it's important to have a way to rejuvenate," Chan says. "For us it was about finding a way to let our residents feel pampered."

Amenities at Club PA, Park Avenue's exclusive amenities space, include an outdoor swimming pool and private, resort-inspired cabanas.

The pool house has an entertainment kitchen, hot tub, steam room and sauna. For film screenings and other entertainment, head to the entertainment lounge and karaoke media room. The sky garden offers breathtaking views of the city lights.

When residents want exercise, they can use the private tennis court, yoga pavilion, putting green, or fully equipped, state-of-the-art fitness gym. There's even a golf simulator for residents to practise their swing.

Inside the homes, indulgent features include high-quality finishings that heighten the sense of luxury, Chan says.

Each of the four interior colour schemes is a collection of colour-co-ordinated, high-quality surfaces, including wide-plank laminate, carpet and marble tile flooring, engineered quartz countertop, marble tile backsplash, and soft-close laminate cabinetry with open glass display shelving.

Incorporating form and function was crucial to the design of Park Avenue homes, Chan says. Each unit comes with an expansive kitchen. The beautiful, European-styled integrated appliance packages include a bottom-mount, counter-depth fridge, a hood fan, dishwasher, gas cooktop, wall oven and microwave.

The 40-storey tower offers 424 one- to three-bedroom homes between 550 and more than 1,300 square feet. Park Avenue homes start at $182,900 with 250 homes priced less than $250,000.

Prospective residents will be able to check out Park Avenue's high style for themselves at the development's dramatic new presentation centre, slated to hold its grand opening in April. The luxurious, two-level centre, located on Park Place Plaza beside the King George SkyTrain Station, will be the largest presentation centre in Surrey.

"We can't wait to show Park Avenue off," Chan says. "The presentation centre will be an absolute spectacle."

For more, see parkavenueliving.ca.

PARK AVENUE IS A SAVVY INVESTMENT

Park Avenue is situated in one of the most ideal investment areas in Canada, according to Isaac Chan, sales director at Concord Pacific. Surrey has been rated as the best place to invest in B.C., and among the top three best places in Canada.

Surrey is quickly becoming a major economic hub, and the city's long-term strategic plan means that the jobs and growth opportunities in the region won't be slowing any time soon, Chan says.

Since 2001, Surrey's population has increased by 100,000, and is projected to increase by another 250,000 by 2040. To put that in perspective, Surrey has been projected to surpass the population of Vancouver within the next 20 years, Chan says.

The Park Place Community is part of the new Surrey, Chan says. It's the largest community by Concord Pacific in B.C., outside of Yaletown.

"Surrey is investing in an incredible community and Park Avenue is providing first-rate homes for that community," he says.

THE LARGEST COMMUNITY IN SURREY

If every neighbourhood adds flavour to its homes, and vice versa, then Park Avenue, a new 40-storey tower going up in downtown Surrey, is about to inject the city with some high style, says Isaac Chan, sales director at Concord Pacific.

"Park Avenue is bringing polish to the neighbourhood," Chan says. "The simple, sleek exterior and interior styling and luxurious amenities package take the development to another level."

Park Avenue is the newest phase of the master-planned Park Place community, which is an integral part of Surrey's city centre.

So Park Avenue lends a little sophistication to downtown Surrey, but what does Surrey bring to Park Avenue?

"Surrey has a real energy," Chan says. "The Surrey attitude is this incredible sense of can-do optimism. It's the enthusiasm of a place that's ready to break out and become a metropolis," he says. "The feeling is infectious."

On a practical level, the neighbourhood also brings convenience. Park Avenue is centrally located just a short walk from the King George SkyTrain Station, Park Place Plaza, SFU Surrey Campus and Central City Shopping Centre, which has 130 shops and services, including Surrey's own Central City brew pub.

The neighbourhood offers plenty of green space, too. The landscaped gardens and natural water features within Park Avenue cultivate a peaceful atmosphere, and many homes look out onto the 350-metre long Quibble Creek greenway, a scenic pedestrian thoroughfare nearby.

Surrey's Holland Park, a new 10-acre green space in the city centre, is also a short walk away, and has been recently upgraded with playgrounds, gardens and water features. Holland Park now hosts many community events throughout the year, including Surrey's Fusion festival and summer movie nights.

"The city of Surrey is doing all the right things to develop itself into a world-class city," Chan says. "It's encouraging density and the growth of businesses, but that growth is balanced with well-planned green spaces and transportation options.

"Park Avenue brings the comfortable, high-style residences, and the city brings the energy and lots of great public spaces and programs. Everyone wins."

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LIVING IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

KITS 360 DESIGNED WITH NEEDS OF RESIDENTS IN MIND

CONTRIBUTED

When you live in the city, home needs to be a solace, says Macartney Greenfield, project manager for Rennie Marketing Systems.

That's why Kits 360, the newest development by Intergulf Development Group, was designed with residents' ease, comfort and enjoyment in mind, according to Greenfield.

"Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential, and part of that is creating a home environment that nurtures you," she says.

At Kits 360, that starts with the site. The 11-storey condo development is located at 7th and Burrard, conveniently close to downtown Vancouver, but far enough away so that it's just outside the fray.

Modern interiors designed by the award-winning Cristina Oberti Interior Design Inc. create a warm and welcoming space throughout the development's range of studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments.

Lacquer or high-gloss cabinetry, stone countertops, engineered laminate wood and porcelain tile flooring streamline the kitchen and bathroom, providing elegant, low-maintenance surroundings.

Fully outfitted kitchens make cooking a pleasure.

And at the end of a long day, the deep Hytec Kohler soaker tub provides a welcome escape (glass of wine optional).

Incredible views of the mountains, ocean and city skyline also help residents and guests kick back, Greenfield says. The expansive windows in each condo are designed to maximize residents' enjoyment of the beauty of Vancouver, and to let in lots of natural light.

The open living rooms, some with over-height ceilings, make the most of the stunning city backdrop.

For those who love to garden, entertain, or just relax outdoors, the shared spaces at Kits 360 include a rooftop terrace with garden, lounge and kitchen areas.

A community room and two fully equipped exercise centres provide entertainment when it's raining out.

The studio suites at Kits 360 start at $299,900, one-bedrooms start at $399,900 and two-bedroom view suites start at $599,900.

Buyers can pay as little as five per cent down on a condo at Kits 360 — as low as $14,995. Homes will be move-in ready late this summer.

Find out more at the Kits 360 presentation centre, open daily from noon to 5 p.m. at 1705 Burrard at West 1st Ave. in Vancouver, or call 604-737-0360. Closed Fridays or by appointment.

For more, see kits360.com.

EVERYTHING YOU NEED IS MINUTES AWAY

CONTRIBUTED

If "local" is the latest buzzword, Kits 360 residents are at the trend's epicentre. The 11-storey condo development is surrounded by fun places to eat, shop, exercise and socialize, according to Macartney Greenfield, project manager for Rennie Marketing Systems.

"The location of Kits 360 is close to lots of great spots, all within walking distance," she says. "Residents could forget they own a car."

Just off south Burrard Street, Kits 360 is a short walk, bike or bus ride to downtown Vancouver and all its restaurants, stores and services.

But Kitsilano is its own thriving culture hub, so if residents are looking for entertainment, they don't need to venture far from home.

Granville Island is a 12-minute walk from the development. Its public market sells some of the best local produce and specialty foods in Vancouver, and when you don't feel like cooking, it's also home to many well-loved restaurants, including seafood specialists Bridges and Sandbar. Theatre lovers can catch one of the many ongoing shows at the Arts Club Theatre.

Fourth Avenue is a local shopping hub with a relaxed vibe. Shop for stylish jeans, home wares, or baby stuff, and enjoy the area's mouth-watering, multicultural restaurant selection.

"Many of the shops in the area are locally owned and the commercial streets — 4th, Broadway, Cornwall — are really walkable," Greenfield says. "It's the perfect thing to do on a weekend — walk up 4th or Cornwall with a friend, and grab a coffee along the way."

The Seawall, just steps away from Kits 360, is where the locals get fit.

Run, bike ride, in-line skate, skateboard or walk — anything goes.

"Living in the area encourages residents to live an active lifestyle," Greenfield says.

Head to Vanier Park for a local cultural excursion. The Museum of Vancouver and the Vancouver Maritime Museum there offer interactive exhibits on local history.

When Kits 360 residents need to travel to other parts of the city, they can catch public transit conveniently nearby.

"Kitsilano is a very welcoming neighbourhood," Greenfield says. "Kits 360 residents will become locals quickly, no matter where they're from."

IT'S TIME TO START COOKING

The kitchens at Kits 360 are your playground.

Custom floor-to-ceiling cabinetry and stone countertops provide a clean, bright space for culinary experimentation.

The two-bedroom homes at Kits 360 feature an upgraded Meile appliance package that will make cooking and entertaining a pleasure.

Store ingredients in your ample cabinet and pantry storage and family-sized bottom-mount Miele refrigerator. The kitchens are designed to optimize storage opportunities.

Sauté some vegetables on your gas cooktop while dinner bakes in the oven, with the peace-of-mind of a top-of-the-line freestanding hood fan above. And when it's time to clean up, get it done easily with your oversized Blanco micro-edge sink and full-sized Miele dishwasher.

"The kitchens at Kits 360 were designed with convenience in mind, so that residents can spend time doing what they care about," says Macartney Greenfield, project manager for Rennie Marketing Systems.

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*Based on 25.8% down payment, 25-year amortization with 1-year fixed rate. Interest rates effective as of October 15, 2012, and are subject to change without notice. Interest is calculated semi-annually, not in advance. All mortgage products are offered by Royal Bank of Canada and are subject to its standard lending criteria. Developer reserves the right to make changes and modifications to the content contained herein without prior notice. E.&O.E.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

ROLLING ON THE RIVER

It's not a challenge to find homes for very good value in Metro Vancouver, says Dave Bauman, sales and marketing director at Parc Riviera. You just need to know where to look.

Right now, one of those places is on the banks of the Fraser River in North Richmond. The master-planned Parc Riviera community offers the best riverfront value in Richmond, with prices starting at approximately $250,000 for a one-bedroom condo, and 15 condos on offer for less than $269,900 and 15 townhomes less than $449,900.

Well-maintained parkland and a spectacular view of the river wouldn't be complete without a beautiful home from which to enjoy them. The development's first phase of four buildings will look out over the Fraser River and North Shore mountains, some of the best views in the city.

"There's a limit of waterfront property available in Metro Vancouver, and Parc Riviera is designed to use that opportunity to the fullest, but at prices that are still very competitive," Bauman says.

The apartments will range from 519 to 1,300 square feet, and the townhomes will measure approximately 1,100 square feet. The homes' nine-foot ceilings are designed to let in lots of light and give the homes a sense of space, Bauman says.

The value continues in the homes' interiors. The high-quality appliances and finishings include solid quartz countertops, engineered hardwood floors and high-end stainless steel GE Café appliances with a five-burner gas range.

The over-sized balconies will fit four around a table, plus a barbecue, for a more private enjoyment of the view.

Residents will also save money on utilities. The development's geo-exchange system is designed to provide efficient heating in the winter and cooling in the summer, and will help residents cut down their energy use.

Both developers, Dava Developments and Oris Consulting, consider sustainable living a priority in their projects, and both have a proven track record in Richmond, Bauman says.

"Parc Riviera is a rare combination," Bauman says. "It's well-made riverfront homes at affordable prices."

Visit the Parc Riviera presentation centre at 10111 River Dr., open daily, except Friday, from noon to 5 p.m., or call 604-231-5900.

For more, visit parcriviera.com.

HOMES FOR AN ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Wedging physical exercise into a busy schedule is a lot easier when you have trails and a fully equipped gym and swimming pool at your doorstep.

These bonuses make a huge difference in quality of life for residents at Parc Riviera, says Dave Bauman, sales and marketing director at Parc Riviera. "Understanding the lifestyle needs of our buyers is incredibly important to us.

"The accessibility to exercise and a place to get outdoors is one of the most important features of Parc Riviera. We're really lucky to have such amazing access to the dyke trail."

The 4,000-foot trail lines the water and offers expansive views of the city, water and mountains. Whether you are walking, running or biking, green spaces improve quality of life, Bauman says.

Club Riviera, the private community centre for residents, offers a fully equipped gym with weights and cardio equipment, as well as a lap pool and hot tub, for when residents would rather get their exercise indoors.

CONTRIBUTED

GREAT PLACE TO GROW UP

When young kids are growing up, a tight-knit community can make a big difference in their lives.

That's the neighbourhood feel that Parc Riviera was designed to create, says Dave Bauman, sales and marketing director at Parc Riviera.

"Parents want to offer their kids the best, to enrich their lives as much as possible," he says.

At Parc Riviera, that means lots of green space, places to play and socialize, and easy accessibility to schools and daycares.

The master-planned community of condos and townhomes in north Richmond on the banks of the Fraser River was planned with more than five acres of green space, including 65 per cent of the area of the first phase, which is scheduled for completion by this fall for the townhomes, and spring 2014 for the condos.

There are two major parks in the community, as well as plenty of trails, kids' play areas, a picnic area, a stage for community performances, tennis courts and sunset seating on the master-planned community's 20 acres of waterfront. Outdoor art will dot the parkland, including a playfully outsized stainless steel raindrop called Water #10, by Chinese sculptor Jun Ren.

The green space is also woven among the condos and townhomes so that every unit has green space and lush landscaping at their doorsteps.

At-grade parking, accessible via an underground parkade, makes the development's ground level more kid-friendly and increases the safety and community-friendly feel of the area. The homes are meant to appeal to a wide range of people, he says. "Everyone from first-time buyers, to young families to empty nesters."

The family-friendliness of the master-planned community has been a big selling point for many buyers, Bauman says.

"Parc Riviera is a place where residents can spend time with their kids outside," he says.

Tait Elementary School is just two blocks away, and the full development is designed to incorporate commercial space, including a daycare, so busy parents won't have to travel far for the necessities.

Diverse shopping is easily accessible nearby along the Bridgeport corridor. Bridgeport SkyTrain Station along the Canada Line is just a 10-minute walk away.

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DAVA DEVELOPMENTS ORIS

THE ROLSTON: LARGER THAN LIFE

Just four months until summer and the countdown has begun. The Rolston condo tower — that unusual building on the south end of Granville downtown with exterior styling as red as a pack of cinnamon hearts — will be move-in ready this summer.

"Construction has progressed so that you can actually see it on the skyline. It's larger than life," says Karen Hoff, project manager with Pilothouse Real Estate.

The Rolston's distinctive personality was created by Rize Alliance to bring vibrancy to the community, Hoff says.

"Rize wants to actively contribute to making this neighbourhood an awesome place to live," she says.

The personality of the Rolston starts on the outside. The 27-floor building's oversized balconies and distinctive styling give it a playful, modern look meant to appeal to the development's target demographic — adventurous urbanites who like something a little different, Hoff says.

Located at 1336 Granville St. off Davie Street downtown, Rolston's visual personality suits the energy of its neighbourhood.

Available homes range from $349,900 to $619,900. The 187 one-bedroom and two-bedroom homes range from 581 to 889 square feet.

Inside, Rolston homes have just as much personality, with modern design in four high-impact colour palettes, including light grey or white quartz countertops, cabinets in a soft latte or high-gloss grey or white, high-end laminate flooring in grey, taupe or mocha, and a glass tile kitchen backsplash in clear, teal, black or orange.

"Along with the neutral colour palettes, we wanted to give buyers a colour option that was a little edgier," Hoff says of the orange option. "It brings warmth and energy to the units."

All homes are equipped with stainless steel Whirlpool appliances and a stacking washer and dryer.

The modern design also extends to the bathroom, which is outfitted with white subway wall tiles and large one-by-two-foot porcelain floor tiles, a big soaker tub and dual-flush toilets.

Maybe best of all, every home gets "tons of light," according to Hoff, thanks to the outsized windows lining each unit.

"The Rolston is all about colour and personality," Hoff says.

Visit therolston.com or the Rolston sales centre at 140–1265 Granville St.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

REVITALIZING THE GRANVILLE STRIP

First there were the Dominion Building and the Sun Tower. Then came Science World and the new B.C. Place Stadium. Now there is a new landmark in the city of glass — the Rolston.

The distinctive red exterior styling and prominent location at the south end of Granville Street downtown give the new 187-unit condo development by Rize Alliance Properties a character all its own.

"We see the Rolston as more than just a building. It symbolizes part of the growth and vitality of the Granville strip," says Karen Hoff, project manager at Pilothouse Real Estate.

At the tail end of the vibrant shopping and entertainment district, the Rolston is just a few minutes walk from many of Vancouver's best restaurants, stores and venues.

"We want residents to be able to step out the front door and find something spectacular to see, do or eat," Hoff says. "This neighbourhood has that in spades."

At the same time, the development is situated slightly off the beaten path in a quieter location than its neighbours a couple blocks to the north.

When Rolston residents want a breath of fresh air and some green space, they can take a short jaunt to George Wainborn Park or the Seawall, just one and two blocks away, respectively. And there's no need for a car when residents need to venture farther. Public transportation can be found right outside the building.

Inside the Rolston, two shared outdoor spaces, the Terrace and the Gardens, provide plenty of space for solitary relaxation or private get-togethers.

Host a picnic or relax with a cool drink on the Terrace, a large outdoor space on the 16th floor that includes greenery, seating and a barbecue area.

In the Gardens on Rolston's roof, a 4,000-square-foot shared space 290 feet above the Pacific, residents can enjoy panoramic views and lots of amenities, including a barbecue bar. Green thumbs can garden to their hearts' content in rooftop urban agricultural plots. "The Rolston has something for everyone," Hoff says.

Visit the Rolston sales centre at 140–1265 Granville St.

For more, see therolston.com.

RESTORING A HISTORICAL LANDMARK

Built next to the celebrated Yale Hotel, Rolston's modern design plays on the area's colourful history. The building is being fully restored and renovated as part of the development.

"It's important for us to keep the soul of the Yale intact," says Brent Beatson, development manager at Rize Alliance Properties.

The Yale Hotel was built more than 100 years ago as housing for workers on the Canadian Pacific Railway who had moved from the small B.C. town of Yale to work in the area now known as Yaletown.

Over the years, the Yale Hotel retained 44 long-term, single-room occupancies, and became known for its blues musical acts, including guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan and singer Long John Baldry.

"Vancouver needs to develop and densify, but at the same time we value the city's history and want to conserve that," Beatson says.

"The Rolston is enabling the conservation of the Yale Hotel and injecting it with new life."

VANCOUVER - WE SINCERELY APOLOGIZE FOR THE SEX COMMENT IN OUR RECENT ROLSTON ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN.

The advertising campaign stating that "The Rolston was So Enticing Other Buildings Want To Have Sex With It" was considered alarming by a number of people. Yes, we did sell multiple homes at The Rolston because of this campaign but if the Sex comment was considered inappropriate, we do apologize.

In the future we will focus on presenting the Rolston condominium homes solely on their amazing architectural design, downtown Vancouver location and very affordable pricing.

And, for the record, we deny the rumor regarding the CN Tower and The Rolston having sex. Nor did The Rolston have sex with the Wave condominiums in Surrey or Centro homes in Richmond. And we would like the OnQue development to stop calling. The Rolston doesn't like you in that way and only wants to be friends.

Check out the Rolston for yourself and see what all the fuss is about!

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ENJOY THE URBAN, SUBURBAN LIFE

BRICKSTONE WALK 2

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

With its Brickstone Walk 2 development, Nu-Gen Projects has united the convenience of urban living with the comforts of suburban life.

Located in the hub of the Lower Mainland, Brickstone Walk 2 residents are perfectly situated to take advantage of everything downtown New Westminster has to offer. Steps from their door is a selection of restaurants, markets and shops, while urban parks, such as the new Pier Park on the waterfront and New Westminster's destination Queen' Park, provide the perfect place to relax or play on a sunny day.

"The downtown core is developing and evolving," says Courtenay Edwardes, marketing manager for Pilothouse Real Estate and a New West native. "When people come to New West and experience all the city has to offer, they fall in love with the place."

Commuters also love the area for its easy access to all corners of Metro Vancouver. The New Westminster Skytrain Station on the Expo Line is only five minutes away, and from there riders can get to Granville SkyTrain Station in less than half an hour, less time than it takes to drive.

"It is very central," Edwardes says. "We have five SkyTrain stations in New Westminster so it's very accessible for people who don't drive."

At the end of the day, commuters can come home and enjoy the privacy and community of a suburban neighbourhood. Residents enter their homes from a central courtyard that acts as a meeting place, Edwardes says.

"It's like a small community," she says. "Brickstone is set up so neighbours can get to know each other. The walk-out patios, gathering spots and even the herb gardens are all part of the community feel."

Brickstone Walk 2's 35 townhomes unite the charm of the Royal City's heritage homes with the elegance of modern architecture. The exterior brickwork is reminiscent of New Westminster's early days, when homes were built one brick at a time.

"People are drawn to the warm exterior look of these homes," Edwardes says. "These are actual bricks laid by a bricklayer."

To learn more about Brickstone Walk 2, visit the sales centre at 306 6th St. in New Westminster, or call 604-376-8060.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

READY THIS FALL

Prices start at $259,900 for a one-bedroom and flex, which is spacious enough to be used as an office or den. At 1,243 square feet, Brickstone Walk 2's three-bedroom and den floor plans provide plenty of space for growing families. Homes will be ready for occupancy this fall.

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From $259,900

Visit the Sales Centre
Open Daily (Closed Fridays) Noon - 5pm
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www.BrickStoneWalk.com

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Developed by **Nu-Gen Projects Ltd.** Marketing & Sales by **Pilothouse Real Estate Inc.**

BUILDING NEW COMMUNITIES

CONTRIBUTED

QUATTRO 3 IN NORTH WHALLEY

With its 12-hectare Quattro project in North Whalley, Tien Sher is building more than just apartments — it is building a community.

"Tien Sher CEO Charan Sethi's vision is that it will be the next Yaletown, really," says Corinne Ludovici, sales manager for Quattro 3.

The 1,100-suite condominium development has attracted a vibrant mix of buyers, effectively bringing new life to the neighbourhood.

When Tien Sher started selling its Quattro 1 project six years ago, for example, it sold out in less than five hours. A month later, all 116 apartments in Quattro 2 were snapped up in just more than an hour.

The developer has once again expanded its influence in the rapidly growing neighbourhood with the completion of Quattro 3, Surrey's first wood-framed, six-storey apartment complex.

"It is truly the start of building a new community," Ludovici says. "The more you develop the more change you're going to see."

With prices ranging from $149,900 for a junior one-bedroom to $251,000 for a two-bedroom, buyers are undoubtedly drawn to Quattro 3's affordability. However, its central location at Whalley Boulevard and 108th Avenue is arguably even more appealing.

"It's kind of the gateway to get to downtown," Ludovici says about the area.

The Gateway SkyTrain Station is less than a 10-minute walk from Quattro 3 residences. From there, it's only a 35-minute ride on the Expo Line to downtown Vancouver, and less than 10 minutes to the Simon Fraser University Surrey campus at the Surrey Central SkyTrain Station.

Take the train to Metrotown or New Westminster in the same time or less as it takes to drive, but without the stress of traffic.

Of course, not all of Quattro's residents will be commuters. One of Quattro 3's more unique features are its live-work suites. The two-storey design provides residents with living space on the upstairs that can be kept completely separate from the office or retail outlet below. The suites open up directly on to the street for easy customer access.

"Clients come in without even realizing they are walking into your home," Ludovici says, adding it would be a perfect spot for a barber, nail salon or law practice.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF B.C. BONUS

First-time homebuyers who purchase a Quattro 3 home before April 1 can take advantage of the B.C. First-Time Buyers bonus and receive a cheque for up to $10,000.

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AFFORDABLE AND CONVENIENT

ENGLISH MEWS 2 HOMES ACCESSIBLE TO ALL FAMILIES

With its English Mews 2 development in New Westminster, Tien Sher Group of Companies has coupled affordability with convenience.

The homes at English Mews 2 are accessible to families of all income levels, with prices starting at $409,000 for a three-bedroom townhome. Its location in the hub of Metro Vancouver means residents won't sacrifice comfort for price.

Everything a growing family or busy professional needs — transit, education, shopping and recreation — is within walking distance or a short bus ride away.

Children can walk to both Queensborough Middle School and Queen Elizabeth Elementary in 15 and 10 minutes, respectively.

For after school and weekends, playgrounds, walking trails, the Boro All Wheel Park and English Mews 2's own fenced-in yards offer kids and parents alike plenty of places to enjoy the outdoors.

The nearby Queensborough Community Centre is currently undergoing a $7.67-million expansion, which will see a new library, a larger weight room, multi-use rooms and childcare spaces added to the existing facility.

Shopping is a breeze with stores like Walmart, Banana Republic and Best Buy nearby.

"Everything you look for when you're moving in to a new community is here," says Maureen Simpson, sales manager for English Mews 2. "It's very central."

Residents commuting outside of New Westminster can take advantage of Vancouver's world-class transit system.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Buses that stop right outside the door of English Mews 2 can take riders to the 22nd St. SkyTrain Station in approximately three minutes. From there, travel time to downtown Vancouver is a little more than 20 minutes, while Surrey City Centre, Lougheed Town Centre and Commercial Drive Station are all around 15 minutes away by train.

"It's a very good location to travel in any direction," Simpson says.

When the work day ends, families come home to comfort. The 1,400-square-foot three-bedroom homes are spacious enough to ensure privacy, while the communal dining and living rooms bring everyone together.

To book a viewing, visit the presentation centre at Unit 10, 1135 Ewen Ave., or call 604-517-1688. Registration forms can also be filled out online at englishmews.com.

KITCHEN APPLIANCES ARE INCLUDED

Each of the 23 available homes at English Mews 2 comes equipped with stainless steel kitchen appliances from Maytag and Samsung, a built-in security system, and free Shaw high-speed internet, high-definition TV and high-definition PVR for 12 months.

For more, see englishmews.com.

NOW SELLING!

ENGLISH MEWS 2

Welcome to English Mews2, a collection of 2 & 3 bedroom townhomes located in the Queensborough community, centrally located in the heart of Metro Vancouver. Easy walking distance to transit, Queensborough Landing Outlet Stores, Schools, Parks and so much more. Starting at only $329,900.

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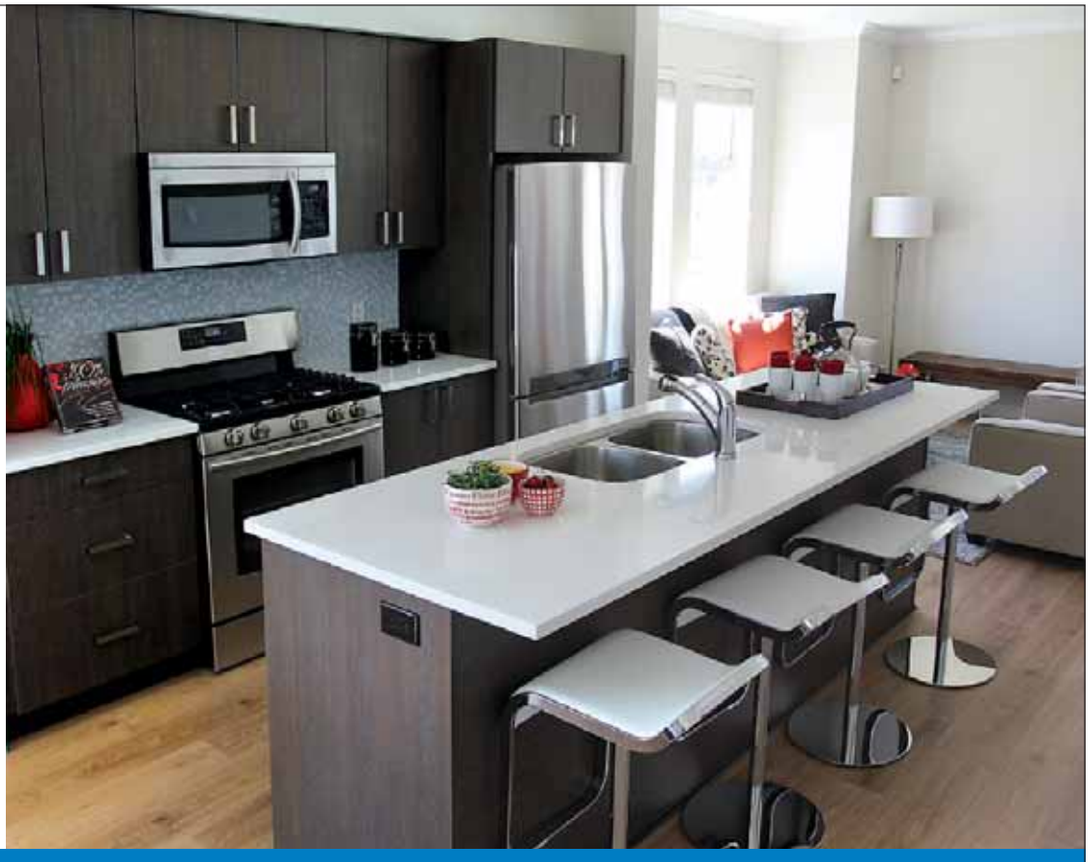

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A SEXY ENTRANCE FROM STRATUS

LOBBY WELCOMES RESIDENTS IN STYLE

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

At Stratus, the newest tower in the SOLO District of North Burnaby near Brentwood Mall, the sense of arrival when you walk into the lobby is tangible.

Perhaps it's the soaring sense of space created by the large custom-designed fireplace and triple-height ceiling. Or maybe it's the chandelier by local design house Bocci, which dangles above the concierge desk.

Either way, Stratus welcomes residents in style, says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager at Appia Developments, the developer of Stratus.

"Stratus has probably one of the sexiest lobbies I've seen," she says. "The way the site was sloped, and the configuration of the building, allowed us to create a really beautiful space to welcome residents."

The 367 homes in the 45-storey tower follow suit. The units were designed by Chris Dikeakos Architects. The interior design for each home, by Cristina Oberti, features colour schemes in Grigio or Noce.

High-quality finishings in every home include imported Italian Armony Cucine cabinetry, Kohler fixtures, polished quartz countertops, engineered laminate flooring, custom roller blinds, nine-foot ceilings, seven-foot doors and large windows that make the most of the wide views of the North Shore mountains, Mount Baker and downtown Vancouver.

"The simple, high-quality fixtures and finishes really give the homes a clean, modern feel," Murrell says.

The builders of Stratus made sure the units had just as much substance as they had style. "The homes at SOLO District definitely have that sense of luxury," Murrell says.

"But they're also very practical and affordable."

The towers of the SOLO District community, including Stratus, are designed to LEED Gold equivalency.

Available units at Stratus start at $279,900.

The homes range from 479-square-foot junior one-bedrooms to 1,690-square-foot three-bedroom penthouses. There's also a very limited number of SkyVillas available — 1,785-square-foot, two-level units with three bedrooms plus a den.

Of course, there are extra perks to purchasing a home at Stratus. Homebuyers will each receive a complementary one-year membership to the Modo Car Share program, with three dedicated vehicles available to borrow.

At SOLO, quality isn't just about looks. It's about lifestyle.

The sales office is open daily, except Fridays from noon to 5 p.m., at 2131 Willingdon Ave., or call 604-298-8800. Visit solodistrict.com for more.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Jim Bosa, president of Appia Developments, sees a world of potential in North Burnaby. That's why he decided to build the SOLO District community, a master-planned neighbourhood of residential, commercial and green space clustered just south of Brentwood SkyTrain station.

"North Burnaby is in its prime years of growth, and the home values will increase as the area continues to develop," says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager at Appia Developments.

Increasing density in the area is key, she says. Stratus, the first of four towers to be built in what will become a 1,400-home community, will house 367 condos, as well as commercial space. SOLO District will help make North Burnaby one of the fastest growing communities in Metro Vancouver over the next 10 years.

"A smart developer will weave in some commercial space to help create a sustainable community," Murrell says. "You don't want residents to have to travel for miles to get to the nearest grocery store."

Burnaby's first Whole Foods market is slated to occupy the ground floor of Stratus, providing residents with fresh organic and specialty food products right at their doorstep. As SOLO District grows, it will become home to coffee shops, drug stores, an office building and other diverse retailers, all easy walking distance within the community.

That's not to mention the 150 stores, restaurants and services of all stripes at Brentwood Town Centre across the street, including Zellers, London Drugs and Starbucks. When residents need to travel, they are just a three-minute walk from North Burnaby's largest transit hub, the Brentwood Town Centre bus loop and SkyTrain station. From there, it's just a 20-minute ride to downtown Vancouver, or downtown Surrey.

The Burnaby Heights neighbourhood, located along Hastings Street a few minutes bike, drive or bus north of SOLO District, is a colourful historical community that's home to many small shops and businesses, and a thriving local culture. The annual Giro di Burnaby bike race (sponsored by Appia) and Hats Off Day parade are annual events that bring the whole community out to celebrate.

"SOLO District is more than the sum of its individual homes. It's the root of a thriving neighbourhood," Murrell says.

ECO-INVESTMENT

At SOLO District, energy efficiency and cost savings go hand-in-hand.

Appia Developments and FortisBC, the province's natural gas utility, have partnered to offer SOLO District residents a built-in geothermal heat exchange system.

The system will use the relatively stable temperature of the Earth, circulated throughout the building via heat pumps, to provide unlimited heating and air conditioning to every home.

Since the system reduces gas and electricity usage, it will save residents 13 per cent per year on the cost of heating compared to a conventionally heated building. Another direct benefit to residents is that no baseboard heating is required, and SOLO District units were designed with larger than average windows as a result.

"It's rewarding to be able to incorporate a green technology into our development that will help our residents save energy," says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager at Appia Developments. "This is definitely an investment in our future."

This is not an offering for sale. Any such offering can only be made by way of disclosure statement. E.&O.E.

JIM BOSA'S MODEL COMMUNITY SPARES NO EXPENSE

Stratus' grand lobby entrance soars 3 storeys high, finished with marble slab and a custom Bocci chandelier. Plus designer details of the highest standard in every home – 9 foot ceilings, imported Italian Armony Cucine kitchens, and central air conditioning – are only to be found at SOLO District. This is a truly outstanding place to call home.

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A complete meal contained in one hearty bowl of soup

Meatball and Pasta Soup

This recipe serves six. RYAN SZULC, FROM ROSE REISMAN'S FAMILY FAVORITES (WHITECAP BOOKS)

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit
rosereisman.com

This is a great soup for the family. It's a complete meal in a bowl. Try using ground chicken, turkey or pork instead of beef. Remember to add an extra tablespoon of bread crumbs if you're using chicken or turkey.

1. Meatballs: combine ground beef, bread crumbs, barbecue sauce, egg, garlic, basil and 2 tbsp of the Parmesan cheese. Form into 1-inch meatballs (you should have enough for about 24 meatballs). Lightly coat nonstick skillet with cooking spray and set over medium heat. Cook the meatballs for about 5 minutes, turning occasionally or until they are browned on all sides. Set aside.

2. To make the soup, lightly coat a large, nonstick pot with cooking spray. Add the oil and set over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and sauté for 5 minutes or until just softened and browned. Stir in the green pepper and carrots and cook for 3 minutes. Stir in the stock, tomato sauce, tomato paste, chili powder and browned meatballs. Bring to a boil, and then reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, for 15 minutes.

3. Stir in the pasta and simmer for 5 minutes or until the pasta is tender. Serve the soup in bowls, and garnish with remaining 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese. **ROSE REISMAN'S FAMILY FAVORITES (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN**

Ingredients

Meatballs
- 6 oz lean ground beef
- 3 tbsp seasoned dry bread crumbs
- 2 tbsp barbecue sauce
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp finely chopped garlic
- 1/2 tsp dried basil
- 2 tbsp Parmesan cheese

Soup
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 1/2 tsp finely chopped garlic
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped carrots
- 3 1/2 cups beef (or chicken) stock
- 2 cups tomato pasta sauce
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 cup egg noodle pasta
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

For your phone

Relish Soups, Stews & Chilis Recipe Collection (iPad; $1.99)

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
life@metronews.ca

Feeling frozen? A hot bowl is a good remedy. Relish Magazine's collection of soups, stews and chilis nourishes all tastes. Imagine Apple Cider Stew, Wild Rice Chowder or Heirloom Bean Chili.

All the noodle and none of those pesky carbs and fat

The conventional wisdom of cutting carbs and calories generally has meant that pasta is a no-go.

But recently, a new noodle has challenged that thinking, giving dieters a fresh — albeit slightly different — way to have their pasta.

Shirataki noodles have attracted the attention of so many dieters of late. Their appeal? No carbs, no fat and almost no calories.

These slightly chewy noodles are made from a water-soluble fibre that comes from a type of sweet potato. Though they once were found only in Asian markets, they have begun showing up in most large supermarkets.

1. In Dutch oven over medium heat, bring broth to boil. Add carrots, celery, ginger and garlic. Cook, uncovered, until veggies are tender, 8 minutes.

2. Add shirataki and chicken. Simmer until noodles are just hot, 3 minutes. Stir in dill and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Ingredients

- 10 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups shredded carrots
- 1 large stalk celery, coarsely chopped
- 3 tbsp minced fresh ginger
- 2 tbsp minced garlic
- Three 8-oz packages fettucine-style shirataki noodles, drained and well rinsed
- 4 cups shredded cooked skinless chicken breast
- 3 tbsp chopped fresh dill
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Salt and ground black pepper

This chicken noodle soup recipe serves six. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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WHL

Giants defeat Blazers on road

The Giants hit the road on Wednesday and their recent stretch of good play came with them. They beat the Kamloops Blazers 5-3.

After falling behind 1-0 after 20 minutes, the Giants got four goals in the second and third. Top centre Brendan Rouse had two of them, and linemate Cain Franson had a goal and an assist.

The win makes it two in a row for the Giants, the WHL's last-place team. They next play Friday at home.

LIAM BRITTEN/FOR METRO

NHL

Habs get payback vs. Leafs in Toronto

Winning was the best redemption for Max Pacioretty and the Montreal Canadiens.

Pacioretty scored twice to lead the Canadiens to an impressive 5-2 victory over the Toronto Maple Leafs on Wednesday night, and emphatically avenge an embarrassing 6-0 home loss Feb. 9 to their arch rivals.

There was bad blood between the rivals in that last meeting, when an alleged biting incident involving Mikhail Grabovski and Pacioretty took place.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadiens forward Max Pacioretty celebrates his second goal of the night on Wednesday in Toronto. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kesler gone again with broken foot

Ryan Kesler lasted just over two weeks after returning to game action on Feb. 15 in a 4-3 loss to the Dallas Stars. RONALD MARTINEZ/GETTY IMAGES FILE

NHL. Speedy Canucks centre could be out four to six weeks

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

Ryan Kesler didn't take part in Wednesday's practice at Rogers Arena due to a fractured bone in his right foot.

Head coach Alain Vigneault confirmed after the skate that Kesler had undergone a CT scan Wednesday morning that revealed the fracture.

The speedy Canucks centre was seen in the halls of Rogers Arena prior to practice walking around in an air cast.

"Other than some discomfort, he was handling it well," said Vigneault.

"Yesterday he came in after the trip and told our doctor that he still felt a little discomfort. So just to have peace of mind they decided to do a CT scan and we didn't get the results that we anticipated, obviously."

According to Vigneault, Kesler initially underwent two X-rays that were negative. The CT scan revealed the broken bone, and the coach didn't have a specific date for when the injury could've occurred.

The 28-year-old Kesler missed the first 12 games of the season recovering from off-season shoulder and wrist surgeries last spring.

He made his season debut Feb. 15 against the Dallas Stars, and had one goal and five points in seven games.

Vigneault said he assumed Kesler would be out for "a little while," but he couldn't offer a definitive timeline.

Andrew Ebbett is expected to be recalled.

The Canucks also put fourth-line winger Aaron Volpatti on waivers for the purpose of re-assigning him to the Chicago Wolves of the American Hockey League.

Volpatti had one goal in 16 games this season, to go along with four fighting majors. He was also averaging 7:18 of ice time per game.

"(General manager Mike Gillis) felt it was important for Aaron to get a little bit more ice time," said Vigneault.

MLS. Whitecaps try on new duds with Season 3 opener this weekend

The Vancouver Whitecaps revealed their new primary kit Wednesday night at an exclusive season-ticket-holder event.

There isn't too much change between the new uniform and the club's original MLS kit launched in June 2010. Running diagonally are stripes of deep-sea and sky blue, along with the tag "Since 1974" on the back collar, referencing the start of the Whitecaps organization.

"I love it because it tells a story and it's not a drastic difference from what we had," said club president Bob Lenarduzzi earlier Wednesday.

"But it's still a big enough difference with the stripes going the other way and it incorporates everything that we love about Vancouver — the mountains, the water. And I think it's important not to deviate from those things."

The new kit was produced in partnership with Adidas, according to the club's chief operating officer, Rachel Lewis.

The Whitecaps are planning to have a new secondary kit for next season. The current secondary kit is primarily a deep-sea blue.

The Whitecaps open the regular season Saturday against Toronto FC at BC Place. CAM TUCKER/METRO

Nigel Reo-Coker wearing the new Whitecaps kit. WHITECAPS FC

4 SPORTS

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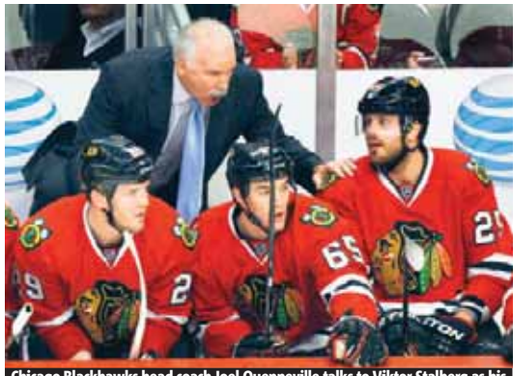
Hawks learned from last year's mistakes

NHL. Chicago boasts 19 game point streak going into tonight's match



Chicago Blackhawks head coach Joel Quenneville talks to Viktor Stalberg as his teammates, from left, Bryan Bickell and Andrew Shaw sit by during a game on Jan. 27. JOHN SMIERCIAK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Record streak

Chicago set the NHL record for a season-opening points streak when it beat San Jose 2-1 on Friday night to make it 17 in a row.

While the streak goes on and the Chicago Blackhawks pile up points, the same words are repeated over and over.

It's about improving each game, they say, and how you finish the season. Trying to win every night is another common refrain.

The uniformity of the message is a testament to the mindset of the streaking Blackhawks, but it's also a vote of confidence for the gruff conductor of the best start in NHL history. While a balanced attack and two hot goaltenders get all the credit, coach Joel Quenneville's focus on Chicago's most glaring problems from last season has played a key role in the Blackhawks' record-breaking run.

"It's nice having some familiarity back behind the bench," forward Patrick Sharp said. "He knows how to push buttons and motivate. I feel like the team that returned from last year had a head start knowing what Q demands of us, how he wants us to play. It all goes hand in hand."

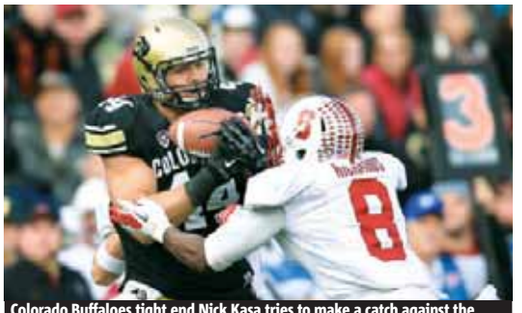
"We were hoping to get off to a good start," Quenneville said. "We looked at our schedule. We had a brutal schedule, when we play 10 out of 12 on the road. So we're thinking hopefully we can put ourselves in a position when we come home we'd be in a decent spot. But we didn't see this happening, for sure."

This run actually dates to last season in more ways than one. The Blackhawks have earned at least one point in 25 consecutive games overall, the third-longest point streak in NHL history.

It's the turnaround in a couple of Chicago's biggest weaknesses from last year that has fuelled the confidence.

"The areas that we talked about going into the season, things that we had to improve upon, I think are much better," Quenneville said. "Our penalty killing for sure. Our goals-against average was, we had hit a different note last year as far as the quantity of goals we were giving up, the type of goals we were giving up. I think we've shored up our defensive-zone coverage, that's helped us. Our power play is more effective."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Colorado Buffaloes tight end Nick Kasa tries to make a catch against the Stanford Cardinal Nov. 3, 2012, in Boulder, Colo. DOUG PENSINGER/GETTY IMAGES FILE

NFL combine. League to probe if player was asked about sexual orientation

The NFL says it will look into whether questions asked of Colorado tight end Nick Kasa at the combine violated any laws or league policies banning employers from inquiring about a possible employee's sexual orientation.

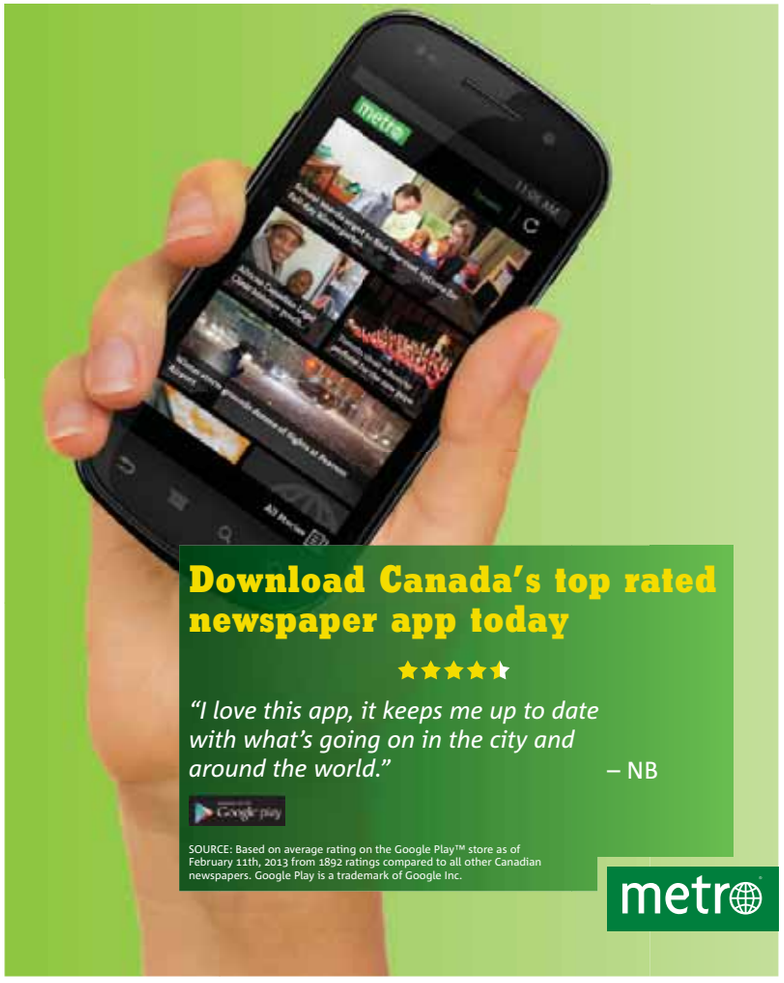
Kasa told ESPN Radio in Denver that during interviews with team officials at the combine in Indianapolis, "(teams) ask you, like, 'Do you have a girlfriend?' 'Are you married?' 'Do you like girls?'"

He did not identify who asked him such questions.

On Wednesday, Kasa said on the Dan Patrick Show he didn't think it "was really a serious question."

The NFL says it will look into Kasa's comments and that "any team or employee that inquires about impermissible subjects or makes an employment decision based on such factors is subject to league discipline."

DeMaurice Smith, the head of the NFL Players Association, said in a statement: "I hope that (the NFL) will seek out information as to what teams have engaged in this type of discrimination and we should then discuss appropriate discipline." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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metro

NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	41	14	.745	—
Indiana	36	21	.632	6
New York	34	20	.630	6 1/2
Atlanta	33	23	.589	8 1/2
Brooklyn	34	24	.586	8 1/2
Chicago	32	25	.561	10
Boston	30	27	.526	12
Milwaukee	28	28	.500	13 1/2
Philadelphia	22	33	.400	19
Toronto	**23**	**35**	**.397**	**19 1/2**
Detroit	23	37	.383	20 1/2
Cleveland	20	38	.345	22 1/2
Washington	18	38	.321	23 1/2
Orlando	16	42	.276	26 1/2
Charlotte	13	44	.228	29

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	45	14	.763	—
Oklahoma City	42	15	.737	2
L.A. Clippers	41	18	.695	4
Memphis	38	18	.679	5 1/2
Denver	36	22	.621	8 1/2
Golden State	33	25	.569	11 1/2
Utah	31	27	.534	13 1/2
Houston	31	28	.525	14
L.A. Lakers	28	30	.483	16 1/2
Portland	26	30	.464	17 1/2
Dallas	25	32	.439	19
Minnesota	20	34	.370	22 1/2
Phoenix	20	39	.339	25
New Orleans	20	39	.339	25
Sacramento	20	39	.339	25

Note: division leaders ranked in top three positions regardless of winning percentage.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
Sacramento 125 Orlando 101
Cleveland 103 **Toronto 92**
Detroit 96 Washington 95
New York 109 Golden State 105
Milwaukee 110 Houston 107
Oklahoma City 119 New Orleans 74
Memphis 90 Dallas 84
Phoenix 105 San Antonio 101 (OT)
Atlanta 102 Utah 91
Denver at Portland

TUESDAY'S RESULTS
Indiana 108 Golden State 97
Orlando 98 Philadelphia 84
Miami 141 Sacramento 129 (2OT)
Brooklyn 101 New Orleans 97
Cleveland 101 Chicago 98
Milwaukee 95 Dallas 90
Phoenix 84 Minnesota 83 (OT)
L.A. Clippers 106 Charlotte 84

THURSDAY'S GAMES — All Times Eastern
L.A. Clippers at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Philadelphia at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Minnesota at L.A. Lakers, 10:30 p.m.

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	20	13	7	0	69	54	26
New Jersey	19	10	5	4	48	49	24
Philadelphia	22	10	11	1	64	67	21
NY Rangers	18	8	8	2	44	48	18
NY Islanders	20	8	11	1	57	68	17

NORTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Montreal	20	13	4	3	58	43	29
Boston	16	12	2	2	49	35	26
Ottawa	20	12	6	2	48	37	26
Toronto	21	12	9	0	59	51	24
Buffalo	20	7	12	1	50	64	15

SOUTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Carolina	18	9	8	1	50	54	19
Tampa Bay	19	9	9	1	70	60	19
Winnipeg	19	9	9	1	52	60	19
Florida	19	6	9	4	48	69	16
Washington	19	7	11	1	52	59	15

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	19	16	0	3	61	37	35
Nashville	20	9	6	5	44	47	23
St. Louis	18	10	6	2	55	52	22
Detroit	19	9	7	3	57	54	21
Columbus	20	5	12	3	44	61	13

NORTHWEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Vancouver	19	10	5	4	54	52	24
Minnesota	18	9	7	2	49	43	20
Calgary	18	7	7	4	49	61	18
Edmonton	18	7	7	4	42	49	18
Colorado	18	7	8	3	44	54	17

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Anaheim	17	13	3	1	59	47	27
Dallas	20	10	8	2	56	57	22
San Jose	18	9	6	3	44	41	21
Phoenix	19	9	7	3	54	51	21
Los Angeles	17	9	6	2	45	41	20

Note: A team winning in overtime or shootout is credited with two points and a victory in the W column; the team losing in overtime or shootout receives one point which is registered in the OL (other loss) column.

WEDNESDAY'S RESULTS
Philadelphia 4 Washington 1
Montreal 5 Toronto 2
Detroit at Los Angeles
Nashville at Anaheim

TUESDAY'S RESULTS
Winnipeg 4 NY Rangers 3
Dallas 5 Columbus 4 (OT)
Washington 3 Carolina 0
Boston 4 NY Islanders 1
Buffalo 2 Tampa Bay 1
Florida 6 Pittsburgh 4
Minnesota 2 Calgary 1 (OT)
Phoenix 4 Vancouver 2
San Jose 3 Colorado 2 (SO)

THURSDAY'S GAMES — All Times Eastern
Tampa Bay at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.
Toronto at NY Islanders, 7 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Ottawa at Boston, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Florida, 7:30 p.m.
New Jersey at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.
Chicago at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Edmonton at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Calgary at Colorado, 9 p.m.
Detroit at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

FRIDAY'S GAMES
Edmonton at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Columbus at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
Minnesota at Anaheim, 10 p.m.

CANADIENS 5, MAPLE LEAFS 2

First Period
1. Toronto, McLaren 2 (Brown, McClement) 13:44
2. Montreal, Emelin 1 (Armstrong, Moen) 16:56
Penalties — Brown Tor (Game Misconduct) 19:22, Brown Tor (Check from Behind Major) 19:22.

Second Period
3. Montreal, Pacioretty 5 (Subban, Markov) 4:17 (pp)
4. Toronto, Macarthur 5 (Kadri, Franson) 15:47
Penalties — Emelin Mon (Interference) 19:47.

Third Period
5. Montreal, Gallagher 6 (Gorges, Desharnais) 9:08
6. Montreal, Pacioretty 6 (Desharnais) 14:26
7. Montreal, Gionta 4 (Unassisted) 17:34
Penalties — None.

Shots

Montreal	**11**	**17**	**12—40**
Toronto	**4**	**8**	**11—23**

Goal — Montreal: Price (W, 11-3-2). Toronto: Scrivens (L, 6-6-0).
Power plays (goal-chances) — Montreal: 1-2. Toronto: 0-1.
Referees — Dennis LaRue, Tom Kowal.
Linesmen — Scott Driscoll, Jean Morin.
Attendance — 19,625 (Air Canada Centre).

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
Both the good and the bad points of your personality will stand out in sharp relief today. There is no reason at all why you should disguise your true nature. Others only disapprove because they are jealous.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Make a special effort to think before you act today, as you could easily go over the top in some way. Even the most cautious of bulls could say or do things that might damage their reputation, so be careful.

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Friends and colleagues will do the opposite of what you ask of them today. Now that you know that you know how to get 'round them, don't you? Ask them to do the complete reverse of what it is you want!

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
However tough things may get over the next 24 hours, you must not compromise your principles or show signs of weakness. You may not be in a position of strength but you do possess formidable strength of character.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you have moments of self-doubt today don't just ignore them and plow ahead regardless. Listen to what your instincts are trying to tell you and, just this once, be a bit more cautious in your actions.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
There may be nothing you cannot do if you put your mind to it but it will pay you to be a bit more selective in your goals. Some things come naturally to you and those are the things you should focus on.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Yes, the truth hurts, but it will hurt even more if you try to avoid it. That applies especially to your career where some kind of setback is likely to annoy you. But what is it trying to teach you?

Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Your life has become far too complicated and you must find ways to simplify your everyday activities. Forget about all those big ideas swimming around inside your head — get serious about details.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You may be impulsive by nature but the planets warn if you overdo it between now and the weekend you will need to give yourself a lot of time to recover — time you cannot really afford to waste.

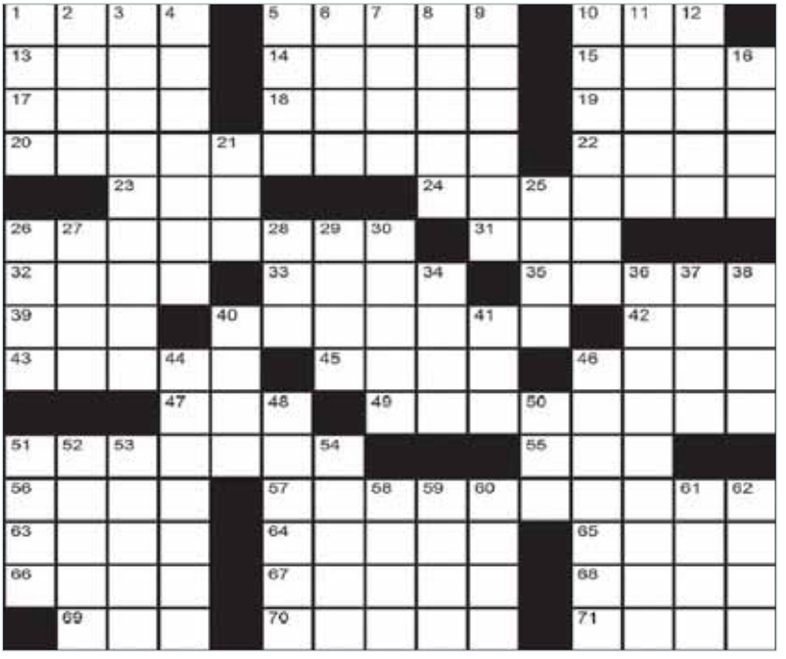
Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
What you learn about other people is useful. What you learn about yourself is priceless. Something will happen today that gives you an insight into the way your subconscious works — an insight that leads to greater happiness.

Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Many things are changing and you may not be entirely happy about it. But deep down you know it's time to move on and if you can't make the move yourself fate will make it for you. Your move!

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Venus, planet of personal love, links with Neptune, planet of universal love, in your sign today, making this the ideal time to reach out and change people's lives. Use your gift of compassion. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

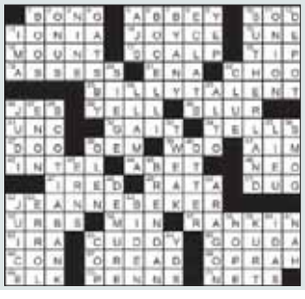
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Lion's share
5. Belonging to Sweden's biggest band
10. New Zealand parrot
13. Sacred Buddhist peak
14. Hen's home
15. "This is __ _ big mistake!"
17. Cartooning, for short
18. __ Max ($50 million top prize draw)
19. Shakespearean word
20. Reality series now with a Canadian version on Slice: 2 wds.
22. __-and-haws
23. Bird's beak
24. Toronto's big airport
26. Boardroom events
31. Canada __ (Brand of ginger ale)
32. Kind of musical work
33. Macbeth's burial place
35. Cain's biblical son
39. Always, to a poet
40. Western province
42. Gladiator's 7
43. Bird beds
45. "__ la Douce" (1963)
46. Photog's originals, for short
47. _ _ _ Speedwagon
49. Colleen of "Anne of Green Gables"
51. "Wind __ My Wings" by Midler
55. And: German
56. __. donor (Unknown benefactor)
57. Assume control: 2 wds.
63. "Oops!... _ __ It Again" by Britney Spears
64. __ by the rules
65. Played-with-a-bow instrument
66. "How to __ a Guy in 10 Days" (2003)
67. Tricked
68. Eye part
69. Nourished
70. Make amends
71. Water bird

Down
1. Biblical land where Moses was buried
2. Prefix to 'potent' (All-powerful)
3. Canadian History: Land lords of New France
4. Donut-middle treats
5. Folkie Mr. Guthrie
6. Winter footwear, just one
7. The pair
8. Take _ __ (Move foreward)
9. Stashed
10. Movie director Ms. Bigelow
11. "The Princess Bride" (1987) star, Cary __
12. Texas landmark to 'remember', The __
16. Formal org.
21. Baseball stat.
25. Expanse
26. Big name in faucets
27. Sword sort
28. Goose egg
29. Desert in Asia
30. Ventriloquy puppet of classic TV, Mortimer __
34. Weapon: French
36. The 'O' of BTO
37. Slang-style smokes
38. School subj.
40. On the ocean
41. Shooting marble
44. Was a hot topic on Twitter
46. Canadian territory since 1999
48. Federal government's centre
50. "Er, what?"
51. Release-from-the-slammer money
52. Arnold Schwarzenegger movie, "__ Days" (1999): 2 wds.
53. Racket
54. Custom
58. Metric weight, for short
59. Biblical garden
60. Give up
61. Movie-__
62. Flair

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

		7				5		
	9		1		7		6	
2	3						7	9
		3	4		2	7		
4								8
		1	6		9	4		
3	1						5	7
	7		9		5		1	
		8				2		

Yesterday's Sudoku

4	7	6	8	9	2	3	5	1
5	9	2	3	7	1	6	8	4
1	3	8	5	4	6	9	7	2
9	8	7	1	3	4	2	6	5
6	4	5	9	2	7	8	1	3
2	1	3	6	8	5	7	4	9
8	6	1	2	5	9	4	3	7
3	2	4	7	1	8	5	9	6
7	5	9	4	6	3	1	2	8

Today 8°/6° Rain 90%
Friday 10°/7° Rain 80%
Know what the weather will be 14 days from now. Check the 14 day trend
TWN incorporates MSC data

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Colors: Stainless Steel

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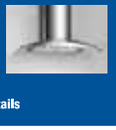

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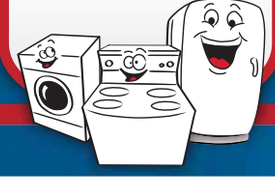

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